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# Theological Magazine

of the

## Evangelical Synod of North America

Motto: 1. Cor. 3, 22-23.
Πάντα ὑμῶν ἐστίν, ὑμεῖς δὲ Χριστοῦ.

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# Theological Magazine

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## Evangelical Synod of North America.

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## EVIL IN THE WORLD AND THE JUSTICE OF GOD

G. Nussmann

The theme as stated takes for granted the existence of both in the world: evil and God. The underlying thought is that these two should not exist together, that the explanation of one demands an explanation of the other.

Nothing is evil or good in itself and for itself. We know of evil and good only in relation to conscious beings. There is neither evil nor good where there is no intelligent mind to draw comparisons or to judge.

To arrive at the proper conception of evil and good a standard of evaluation must be accepted. This standard may be subjective or objective. It is almost self-evident that the objective is the preferable one. Of an objective standard we expect that it be comprehensive (inclusive of practical, empirical and individual experiences and judgments) and intensive (penetrative, capable of discerning the nature, content, and trend of the phenomena evaluated). If we accept this definition of an objective standard we must come to the conclusion that in the case of the evaluation of good and evil we have no infallibbe standard. The subjective enters more or less into the forming of judgments. In spite of this fact men feel the necessity of coming to some conclusion or at least making an attempt toward the solution of the problem.

We shall find our problem enhanced when we turn from the

consideration of the evaluation of evil and good to that of the conception of God. We have been taught that a creation presupposes a creator. We have learned that there is law in the universe and we have concluded that it must have been originated by an intelligent super-mind.

In what relation does God stand to the universe which He created? Shall we accept the position of deism according to which God is somewhere far off while the universe keeps on the move like a wound clock? Then something is wrong with its mechanism. Or shall we rather accept the teachings of pantheism: God is all and all is God? If besides good we still find evil in the world, then God is both good and evil, unless we sternly deny the existence of evil or account for its appearance by making it a delusion of the mortal mind. . . . Are the doctrines of theism more acceptable? God is the supreme person who sustains and governs the universe. In this case we should have to come to some conclusion as to the mode as to what the old dogmatists called 'concursus divinus'. By this was meant the divine activity and its relation to the activity of limited creatures and powers, or in its relation to the development of the world in so far as this is destined by creational, final 'causae efficientes.' In other words: how can God be at the same time immanent and transcendant? If He is immanent, in what connection is He to evil in the world?

The Scriptures state: 'God saw everything He made, and behold it was good.' But there is the fact of evil. Its existence reflects upon the nature of God. This creates a problem, the solution of which may never entirely be found. On the other hand we may say that God does not need justification on our part. We feel, however the necessity of at least approaching the question for the sake of our own faith. Attempts toward a solution of the problems have been made from different angles. We shall review a few of them. An aspect which almost despairs of the solution of the problem is that of pessimism.

### Pessimism

As the first expression of pessimism we take a book of the Old Testament: Ecclesiastes. The central thought of this book which recurs in various forms is emphatically expressed in 1: 2: "Vanity of vanities; vanity of vanities, all is vanity." The author is a sceptic, not a thoroughgoing pessimist. In writing 3: 17a: "I said in my heart, God will judge the righteous and the wicked" he manifests his belief in a living God. But he still is haunted by many doubts: In this world he does not see any justice. Man and beast are treated alike: "all go into one place; all are of the dust and

all turn to dust again." He doubts whether there is a beyond. The only thing he exalts is wisdom: "wisdom is as good as an inheritance" 7: 11. But as this is not able to solve the riddle of life, he advises to enjoy life as long as one is in possession of it ch. 9. The book is in so far significant as it points beyond the Old Testament and establishes the need of a new faith, in which there is also the note of hope.

An elaborate system of pessimism is Buddhism. Its founder was Buddha Siddharda who lived in the fifth or sixth century B. C. A noble prince and man of thoughtful disposition, he had come in the end to the conclusion that ignorance is the cause of all evil. The expression of this evil he found centralized in birth, disease, suffering, old age and death. Existence is on the whole a curse. The best one can do is to seek Nirvana, the extinction of all personal desires and passions in the attainment of a perfect impersonal beatitude. This end is won by right comprehension, right resolution, right speech, right action, right mode of life, right efforts, right thoughts, right peacefulmindedness. Buddhism knows no supreme God or creator.

A great admirer of Buddhism was a German philosopher, Arthur Schopenhauer. According to him all willing arises from want, and want means deficiency, and deficiency is suffering. The world in which we live is not the best, but the worst possible. For this reason non-existence is better than existence, and the only salvation is the complete negation of the will. This resignation begins with complete chastity and voluntary poverty. True salvation comes only when all striving ceases, when we mortify the body by the voluntary crushing of all desire and all activity. The saint who was thus put to death within him all the strivings of his will becomes henceforth a being that is only reflective. "Then nothing can trouble man any longer, nothing can move him, for he has cut all the thousand chords of will which hold us bound to the world, and, as desire, fear, envy, anger, drag us hither and thither in constant pain. He now looks back smiling and at rest on the delusions of this world, which once were able to move and agonize his spirit also. Life and its forms now pass before him as a fleeting illusion, as a light morning dream before half waking eyes, the real world already shining through it so that it can no longer deceive; and like the morning dreams they finally vanish altogether, without any violent transition." This is the Nirvana of Schopenhauer.

Although pessimism lays much greater stress on physical than on moral evil we may appreciate its sense of the reality of evil so often minimized or obliterated by its opposite—optimism.

### Optimism

One of the great exponents of optimism was Gottfried Willhelm Leibniz. His work which comes into consideration here is the Théodicée. In it he seeks a *sufficient reason* for the world as it exists. Now this sufficient reason is based upon a moral purpose. In creating just this particular world God has made a world that comes closest to the moral purpose he has in view. It is "the best of all possible worlds." Evil looms up to us as big as it does because we consider it from our narrow point of view. If we but saw it from the standpoint of the whole, if we could view it as God does, we should recognize it as necessary to the highest perfection. Cover a picture so that only a small part remains visible. This will appear to you as a confused mass of colors and the closer you examine it the less you will be able to learn what it depicts. Uncover the whole picture, assume the correct point of view and you will be able to behold and to delight in its beauty. Listen to music. Often composers mingle discords with harmony. Discords cause a tension of the nerves and therefore displeasure. So much greater is the pleasure that follows the relief attending the resumed harmonies. Everything in life has its two sides, sweet and bitter, cold and hot, dark and light. This fact is the very law of enjoyment. "Es kann der Mensch nichts weniger ertragen, als eine Reihe von guten Tagen."

An evil should not be judged by itself, but always be viewed if at all possible, from the point of view of the whole. It may be necessary to avoid greater evils, or it may be justified by being the means toward the attainment of a good that far outweighs the evil. In physical pain it may serve as punishment or in an educative capacity. As moral evil it is correlative to the good, because without evil there would be no freedom, and without freedom, no virtue. "We cannot lay the blame for evil upon God. God is responsible for realities only in so far as they are positive and perfect; evil is a negative fact, which results from the necessary imperfection and limitation of finite creatures."

The theory here expounded has many excellent points and is principally applicable to natural evil. In the struggle with the forces of nature man suffers many a seeming defeat. But in reality this struggle has been an immense benefit to man. It has developed his resourcefulness, and helped him to attain those wonderful achievements of which our present civilization is so proud.—Pain is not so great an evil as it is often considered to be. It may play the role of a good friend by giving a danger signal of an oncoming disease. Disease is in fact an attempt of our nature to rid our body of some condition or matter that has encroached upon

it.—Even death is not as so often assumed the greatest of evils. It is implied in the structure of the human organism. The Wandering Jew would be condemned to a fate more terrible than death. The death of the old and incapable of advancement assures the progress of the human race.

There is nothing detrimental to our idea of God in saying that He is the author of natural evils. He is immanent in this world and the whole of nature is dependent upon His will. As described in the Psalms of the Old Testament, He is in the storm and in the quake, but also in the still small voice. That in the whole God's dispensations tend to lead mankind upward one may readily assert. But we must confess our inability to vindicate Him when we come to examine particular cases. To rationalizing thought, Job's fate will forever remain a problem.

That even moral evil fits into the rational scheme of God, Georg Willhelm Friederich Hegel tried to prove. "The real is the rational," he said. It is our part to accept it and to try to discover its meaning, not to condemn or praise. Sin attaches to man because of his finite-infinite nature. The solution of this contrast is found in the idea of development. Sin is a stage in the evolution of man through which he rises from naive innocence to self-determined virtue. It is for this reason 'good in the making' and contributory to the final harmony and perfection of the whole.

We must concede that there are elements of truth in this position. Sin does form a transitional step in the history of mankind, but it is not at the same time of a transitory nature. Its positive and really detrimental character is not fully recognized. It is here where we need more of the conception of moral evil as we found it with the pessimists. We cannot afford to lose ourselves in the realm of the universal and impersonal. We must deal with concrete facts. As soon as we do this we find great difficulty in connecting the particular with the whole and establishing harmony between the antagonism of conditions as they are and a good ultimate goal. Let us for instance take the last war. Some ask the question, "Why did God permit this awful struggle?" and add, "It cannot be a God of Love. "Viewing the whole," we may answer, "It is just because He is a God of love, and because this love is a holy righteous love, that his war did come." Wickedness brought to the utmost must destroy itself. "Our God is a consuming fire." It may be long in coming, still we hope that something good will rise from this conflict. The widow, however, with her children whose husband lies buried in one of the trenches of the battlefield views the outcome of the war from an entirely different point. Could we expect her to rise to the heights of a philosopher, and

look at her misery in the light of the whole? Or could one imagine that the assassin of Sarajewo was able to comfort himself with the thought that his dastardly deed was a link in the development which finally will bring to mankind a better era?

The trouble is that in many explanations of evil its material and moral aspect have somewhat been confused. While we may claim for the former a somewhat measurable quantity (we may be able to estimate the loss caused by flood or earthquake) we go wrong by assuming the same of moral evil. Indeed, moral evil is a reality, but as a quality of the human soul. It is a condition from which all mankind suffers, and of which sinful acts are merely the excrescences. How did this evil get into the world and is God in any way responsible for its presence? These are questions of prime importance.

### Attempts to Explain the Origin of Evil

Primitive man does not feel the existence of evil as a world problem. He takes it as a matter of fact without attempting to find any explanation for it. He is only concerned about the manner in which to combat the specific evil that threatens to interfere with his well-being. Only by reflecting and by the conception of a world order man is led to enquire into the origin and meaning of evil in the universe.

The animist assumes that a personal life or soul exists in inanimate objects and in the phenomena of nature. He distinguishes the spiritual world (souls, demons, angels, deities) from the material world. The former may or may not dwell in the latter, but they are responsible for much of the good or evil which exists in the world. In a similar way we find that in polytheism, on a higher plane of religion, the good and evil forces of nature have their correspondents in the realm of the gods.

According to the animist's idea the soul of an individual while yet in an upper world chooses its earthly fate before it enters the body. We meet similar ideas on different strata of human thought life. The great philosopher Plato held the preexistence of the human soul and tried to prove it. So did some of the early Church-fathers, among whom Origin was the greatest. Human souls existed as angels in heaven. Because they fell into sin, they were expelled from heaven and doomed to a period of probation on earth during which they were to inhabit a body of flesh and blood. It might be interesting to state in passing that Mormonism in our day teaches almost identically the same doctrine. Vast multitudes in the Orient believe in the transmigration of souls, where each succeeding incarnation must bear the consequences of the good or evil acts of the antecedent life.

A striking attempt to interpret the existence of evil was the ancient religion of Persia. All good and all evil were traced to two underlying principles (hence the name dualism). The conflict between these was represented by the warfare of Ormuzd the god of light and the source of all good, against Ahriman, the god of darkness and the author of evil, who in later Parsism held equal sway with Ormuzd. But it was thought that in the end the god of light would conquer the god of darkness.

In some respects there is a similarity between the Persian and the Jewish religion. Whether or not the Jews received their idea of Satan from the Persians has not been decided. Modern scholars like Koenig and Marti assume that as a whole the idea of the personification of evil in Satan has grown from within the thought life of the Jews themselves while some modifications of it by the knowledge of Persian conceptions could not be denied. Satan is the adversary, the leader of evil angels, the tempter of men and the originator of evil among men.

In the New Testament he is called Devil i. e. the Slanderer, the Prince of this world, the god of this world. The latter expression may be interpreted 'the ruler of this period.' Other names in the New Testament are: the enemy, the accuser of our brethren, the dragon, the old serpent, Beelzebaal or Beelzebub.

If we hold that the devil is a real spiritual personality "the god of this world" we must guard against making him in his attributes almost equal with God and thus falling into the error of dualism. One other difficulty should not be left unmentioned: while we are ready to blame the devil with introducing all moral evil into the world, we, at least most of us, are willing to concede that it is God who causes natural evils.

Even if we concede that the devil is he through whom sin has come into the world, who is in the end responsible for it? If the devil is a fallen angel God had created and if God foresaw what was to come, why did He create him? Furthermore if God knew beforehand that man would fall into sin, why had He not prevented the catastrophe by simply abstaining from creation? Is it true that God Himself is the author of evil?

None less than John Calvin himself taught the doctrine of double predestination i. e. God not only foreordained from eternity the just to eternal bliss, as Augustine and Zwingli, Luther and Melanchthon held, but also the wicked to eternal condemnation. According to Calvin God ordered Adam's fall into sin. His conception of God was that of an absolute sovereign, whose last object was limitless self-glorification. The happiness of the blessed and the torment of the condemned both contribute alike to this

glorification. God creates the good and the evil in order to manifest His divine honor.

On the fields of psychology and philosophy we meet with a similar current of thought. Here it is called determinism. It is claimed that a man's action is dependent upon his motives, and his motives are determined by his nature and by the conditions in which he finds himself. Where in a mind different motives struggle for expression the one that is strongest will in the end result in corresponding action. The mind yields in such a case to the impact of a motive, for which it is, strictly speaking, not responsible. If this history were true, no one could be made responsible for anything he did. Practically followed out this theory would lead into utter chaos of human conditions.

We must concede that much of what the determinist says is true. We are placed into conditions which we have aided to make only in the least degree. Our physical and mental conditions are such that we find ourselves limited in numberless ways. No matter where we look, in the physical, mental, and spiritual sphere, we find ourselves a part of this great universe, so closely interwoven with it that we cannot but acknowledge our dependence upon it. But after all one may place over against the universe and even over against God his own personality, his ego. He distinguishes himself from all other things and all other personalities. He is a unit for himself of which there is none other in the world. If he is mechanically determined in all his decisions and actions then he is merely a cog in a great wheel. But if he observes that the universe is not a mechanism but an organism he feels the throb of life and freedom. He is an individual, a microcosm, the type of the macrocosm without him, of which he nevertheless feels himself a part. Any act he commits, although he may be influenced by all the different factors of life (heredity, environment, education, position, health or sickness etc.) is his own and he is responsible for it. The degree of freedom in which he acts may be of different tensity. It stands to reason that his freedom in action will be ever so much greater, the closer he relates himself to the physical, mental and spiritual laws by which this universe is governed.

In laying the responsibility for moral evil upon man it seems that we have not sufficiently vindicated God. If He foreknew that man would abuse his Godgiven powers and lapse into sin thereby subverting these powers from serving to the glory of God to rebellion against God, why did God create man? Could He not have created another world in which evil would have had no place? If we answer this question in the affirmative the further enquiry would be evoked: Then, why did He not do it? In case we say

No, we seem to limit His omnipotence. To speak of God's limitations seems at first to savor of sacrilege. But is it not true that in defining (the very 'define' means primarily 'to mark or determine the limits or ends of') God's nature—as much as that can be done from our very limited point of view —we limit Him. But in speaking of these limitations we must not regard them as limitations from without, but from within, necessitated by God's very nature. Let us take one instance. God is a self-conscious personality. Man is a self-conscious personality. He knows that he is not God, he is of God and in God and to God, but he does not possess God's self-conscious personality. Just as little God could be man.

Let us assume that God wanted to create a universe that would be the expression of His nature and the manifestation of His power. In His mind all possible worlds were present. There were two worlds foremost of all, one where evil in its various forms would have been impossible and everything and everybody good, and another one where the path to light led through darkness and the attainment of good was reached only by the conquering of evil. Had He chosen the first one He would have had to admit, at least to Himself, that He was either unable or unwilling, or both, to cope with evil. This would have spelled defeat for God. So, from the very nature of His being, God was compelled to create a world in which there was a possibility to sin, but in which there was also to be achieved a victory that in value would far outweigh all the sacrifices, all the groaning and travailing on the way.

In coming to this conclusion we have somewhat gone beyond the boundaries of philosophy, into regions where it is not able to follow. One of its great devotees, Lotze, confesses in his Microcosm (II. 716) "I would lay stress upon the decisive and altogether insurmountable difficulty which stands in the way of its being carried out scientifically—i. e. upon the existence of evil and sin in Nature and History. It would be quite useless to analyze the various attempts that have been maed to solve this problem. No one here found the thought which would save us from our difficulty, and I too know it not." Whither shall we turn in our perplexity?

## The Reason of the Cross

In our search for a solution of this perplexing problem we must seek a plane upon which the solution seems at least more probable than on the plane of the intellect. But is there something higher than that? We must enter that of religion. Now religion is far more than a mere theory of the transcendental. It is an attitude in which all the faculties of the human being, feeling, thought, and will are brought into relation to the unseen. We call

this attitude faith. Finely does Bergson say: "Because the whole man enters into faith it brings him nearer to reality than thought alone." Faith is also a 'Weltanschauung', not one that is so much realized as attained. 'Weltanschauung' is largely contemplative, discriminative, faith active. 'Weltanschauung' summarizes and epitomizes the things of this world, faith deals with those of another, which, however, reaches into this world. Faith takes up the 'Weltanschauung' based on science (or whatever name one may give to this ever changing phenomenon) and adds not merely quantatively but qualitatively to it. "Weltanschauung is egocentric, faith is theocentric. Therefore the 'Weltanschauung' of faith is a transfigured one.

But faith is more than merely insight. It is power. It directs an Abraham to leave his home and his fatherland, where his spiritual life would have been marred and thwarted. Obedient to this inner prompting he goes into the unknown. It is faith which keeps a Joseph sweet and sane in spite of the wrong committed against him, and leads him into a position of power and influence. It is faith, that lets Job, in the midst of his sufferings of body and soul exclaim: "I know that my redeemer liveth." (19: 25) Faith helps men of song attain a victorious attitude: "Yea, though I walk in the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me, Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me." And "whom have I in heaven but Thee, and there is none upon earth that I desire besides Thee. My flesh and my heart faileth; but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever." We need but turn to the eleventh chapter of Hebrews to find ourselves confronted with a cloud of witnesses to the power of faith. Millions upon millions of God's children both known and unknown have found strength and joy through faith.

Concerning their own personal life men may have come to such a towering attitude. Would this be strong enough in the face of the collective evil as we find it in this world. There is no doubt that its directing and preserving influence would be immense. So the men of faith in the Old Testament all felt that a just God must lead mankind toward a condition in which natural and moral evil will be a matter of the past. This hope inspired their prophecies concerning a Kingdom in which the Messiah, the representative of God would rule and all would live together in righteousness, happiness, and peace.

This Messiah has come. He has established the Kingdom of God. But the fulfilment of the prophecy has gone far beyond expectation. It has therefore disappointed a great many who cannot see so far nor penetrate so deep. A beneficent rule alone could not

eliminate evil and bring about good. The clearest minds of the Old Testament saw this and looked forward to the times when the heart of stone would be taken from man and replaced by a heart of flesh. *Repentance* would issue into the Kingdom of God.

In the case of the individual, repentance is brought about by his becoming convinced that his past and present are wrong and he is heading toward his own ruin. But how shall mankind as a whole be convinced of its evil condition? God must provide a means by which the world can be shown that in seeking to find itself it was actually loosing itself, that the course it takes, is that of wrong leading to its ruin. God gave Jesus, the Sinless, the Holy One. He came into His own, but His own received Him not. He taught the way of life: "He that findeth his life shall loose it, and he that looseth his life for my sake shall find it." They considered it strange and perceived it not. Miraculously He conquered again and again physical as well as moral evil; they attributed His power to Beelzebub, the prince of demons. Should He gain ascendency, their power would wane. They failed to understand Him. Then they feared Him. Out of fear grew hatred. And from hatred to action is but one step. They crucified Him.

At the cross all the evil forces of man were combined: religious bigotry, greed, perversion of truth, faithlessness, political trickery, blind physical force, bloodthirstiness, obstinacy, reviling. All these may probably be found in connection with other murders. But here they constituted the crime of crimes because they were directed against the Holy One of God. So the cross stands as the sign of evil, physical and moral. To the world which wishes to continue in its course the word of the cross is therefore foolishness or a stumblingblock. In refusing to accept it, the world crucifies Him anew.

On the cross Christ wrought man's redemption. But not through His actual suffering and death for in themselves these are neither moral nor immoral. Redemption was not wrought passively, but actively, by Christ's inner attitude, by His victory over wrong, by being right in the deepest and widest sense of the word. Some of the factors in His victorious attitude are: a consciousness of His mission: as the King of Truth to bear witness toward it; obedience even where He did not fully comprehend the purpose of His Father; penetrative insight into human nature; deep, unbounding, saving love, His heart aching to save even those who wronged Him most; perfect trust in God's righteousness. As He had lived and taught, so He died. His death was the seal of His life, the crown of His work. In the cross God pronounced His sentence upon sin, but at the same time made it the symbol of the reconciliation of His justice and love. Thus Christ vindicated God to man.

And God vindicated Christ. Seemingly defeated He rose. Though invisible, His power is still real. No outward force, no compulsion are used. His power is inward. No man has fallen so low, that Christ could not lift him; no character is so debased that Christ could not cleanse it; no condition exists in human society so sinful or complicated that Christ could not solve it. Men who have lived in sin testify to the saving grace which lies in the name of Christ. The regenerated individual, however, is a type and a pledge of a redeemed world. "In the name of Jesus every knee should bow of things in heaven and things on earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Thus God justifies Himself not to the mind of man by a method of reasoning, but to the conscience of man by a continuous act of saving love.

The world in which we live is still to a very large extent an unsaved world. Selfishness with all its folly is still the principle which actuates mankind. Serious wrongs are committed without apparent punishment. Millions die in their sins. Other millions die as the result of other men's sins. Does not God care for them? Shall we stumble and fall in the face of these obstacles? If we believe that God who has revealed Himself in Christ as the God of justice and of love we may rest assured that all the problems of life which remain unsolved in this present world will find their solution in the world beyond which is separated from us to the eyes of faith by only a thin veil. "Beloved, now are we children of God, and it is not manifest, what we shall be. We know, that if He shall be manifested, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him even as He is." 1 John 3.

If we are Christ's disciples we must share in the cross of Christ. Peter says: "For hereunto, (namely for vicarious suffering) ye were called; because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, that ye should follow His steps." "The disciple is not above his master." To follow in Jesus' steps means to have Christ's mind, to take His attitude. As His disciples look out upon a world in sin they must be conscious of their commission as embassadors for Christ,—obediently follow the directions in which the Father leads them even if they cannot at all times comprehend His reasons,—see the image of God in man, even though badly marred,—be prompted by a deep unfailing love for their fellowmen,—trust that God somehow would vindicate them. In this manner they become co-workers with God contributing in their way to His justification among men. Triumphantly they may say: "Our faith is the victory which has overcome the world."

# "THE EVANGELICAL SYNOD OF N. A."— A BRANCH IN THE LORD'S VINEYARD

By H. E. Koenig

(An attempt to delineate in broad outlines the present status of our Synod, to which is appended a plan of organization for more coherent, systematic and therefore fruitful service.)

Jesus said: "I am the vine, ye are the branches." A beautiful and meaningful simile! Not only is it pertinent in disclosing to the individual whether or no he is truly a Christian, it may also serve any congregation or organized group of churches, such as our Synod, as a touchstone, upon which it may accurately test its past value, its present right to exist and its possible duty to plan and strive for a better tomorrow.

Guided and controlled by the criterion set up for us in the words just quoted, we shall seek to approach and to solve the problem we have set for ourself as indicated in the title of this paper, by means of the so-called "historical method," which happens to be the approved method of modern science as it seeks to evaluate any phase of human existence which has emerged out of a historically determined situation.

We assume that all who may read this paper are intimately acquainted with the history of our Synod. Surely they will readily agree that the Evangelical Synod is a branch in the Lord's vineyard planted, nurtured and prospered by the Master Himself, having placed it in an environment which it was peculiarly fitted to serve. We must all agree that this "branch" proved its value by conveying the life-giving spirit of Jesus to thousands of His followers, many of whom would probably never have come in personal contact with Him, except through this particular channel of His grace. The question as to whether our Synod was justified in its existence in the past must be emphatically affirmed. "By your fruits ye shall know (and judge) them."

But, time, "like an everflowing stream" pursues ceaselessly its onward course, and inevitably brings about changed conditions. Today our denomination is facing a situation which is radically different from that with which our forefathers were confronted. For example: with the change of language the Anglo-Saxon influence has had free access to our ranks, ministers as well as laymen. In the past we primarily served Americans of German extraction. Today, the racial equation of our problem has become very complex. Can we, in view of the fact that conditions have changed so radically, continue to meet the large problems of today as successfully as this was done in the past in the more restricted field? The question arises as to whether it is at all necessary for us to continue to serve any longer, since apparently other branches in the Lord's

vineyard, larger, more vigorous and for many years adjusted to the situation comparatively new to us, can possibly work more effectively than we.

It must be apparent to everyone who observes the cross-currents of thought and sentiment pertaining to this question which circulate through our Synod, that opinions are widely divergent upon this subject.

We note, for example, a conspicuous and prominent sentiment, closely akin to chauvinism, which tends to overemphasize our importance. No longer, thus the argument runs, are we a mere "Synod", a rather unimportant convocation of like-minded brethren, but have advanced to the position of a "church", clearly distinct from others, with specific duties and obligations. With a widened sphere of influence, our need and mission has become increasingly important which fact ought to be reflected in an appropriate name.

In sharp contrast to the above sentiment we note that others deplore the fact that among the rank and file of our pastors there are to be found so few able theologians. Because of this, it is maintained, we shall hardly be able to make any appreciable or valuable contribution to the religious thought and life of America. The brethren who stress this apparent defect in our denomination seem to incline to the opinion that our "branch" in the vineyard has become rather rank, relatively unproductive and its fruit inferior in quality.

There is another type of depreciatory attitude assumed primarily by younger men toward the methods adopted and practised by older brethren, who, for example, only too frequently use the "please pass the handkerchief" style of preaching, which appeals to the emotions without having established its arguments upon scientifically ascertained facts. It is intimated that much dead and unproductive wood is encumbering the progressive development of the vineyard.

Fortunately, there is no need whatsoever to become unduly alarmed over the criticism hastily sketched above. In fact, unless it is morbid, dissatisfaction is usually a sign of vigorous life. It argues that the "will to live" is asserting itself quite aggressively. Apathy, indifference, although less unpleasant than criticism, indicate stagnation and impending decay. Of this we find comparatively little in our Synod.

The writer is firmly convinced that, since the work of our fathers in their restricted field of activity was of great value, there is no doubt that we, their children, are morally obliged to strive with all our might to further the normal and healthy growth of the

branch they cultivated so successfully. Obviously, the Lord of the vineyard expects us to carry on. God never abandons anything over night but has endowed man, as well as nature, with a remarkable ability to adjust himself to a changing environment as the world-process unfolds itself. Some day it will probably be our duty to merge with other branches for united, more effective work. But, *in the meantime,* it is clearly our duty to cultivate *intensively* our peculiar heritage in order that we may infuse more effectively into Protestant American church-life just a pinch of that piquant flavor which in the past distinguished the fruit of our branch from that of others. This, our peculiar "charisma", is, as I see it, 1) a sane spirit of tolerance, 2) an inclination to wholesome piety, 3) an emphasis upon religious education rather than haphazard revivalism and 4) an appreciation of the need and value of union. Of course, we find all of these desirable elements of church-life in various denominations, but in hardly any of them are they present in the particular combination as found with us.

This, then, is the heritage bequeathed us by the fathers. It is a most solemn trust. Such lofty ideals characterize it that all may well enthuse over our task in preserving, developing and infusing its spirit into American church-life. How shall we go about our task, proving our mettle as we seek to solve the problems it presents to us?

Above all we need a goodly number of efficiently trained ministers, who are as earnestly pious and sincerely humble as were the best of our sires. In order to be really successful these men must be able to meet the intellectual demands made by our generation upon all who would aspire to the difficult task of interpreting to it the spiritual implications of reality.

Secondly, we need as a denomination, and we need it badly, an esprit de corps, which shall impel us to cooperate wholeheartedly, enthusiastically, to plan wisely, and constructively, convinced that our task requires and merits loyal and loving devotion. The writer hopes that this paper may help him do his "bit" as he seeks to foster and help develop a more effective spirit of cooperation.

How can we, for example, overcome the depressing effect of being assured again and again that the rank and file of our pastors often find it difficult to work as smoothly and effectively among the people of America as pastors who were trained in other, primarily, strictly English speaking denominations? Our historians have disclosed the reason, and from them we shall receive the cue and the motive necessary to effect a cure.

It has been proved conclusively that the founders of our Synod placed no premium on ignorance. Wholeheartedly they believed

in education. The fact that in the course of development our Synod failed to achieve signal success in producing a corps of ministers conspicuous for their learning, may be traced partly to the economic situation with which they were confronted, partly to the limited demands made upon the intellect by the class of people which it was our peculiar duty to serve, partly also to the tradition and the influence of the "Missionshaeuser" whose primary aim it was to prepare and equip dependable and faithful men for service among primitive people. These "Missionshaeuser," however, did exert that influence which stamped upon so many of our best and most successful pastors that unique character of heroic devotion to the cause of the Saviour which made their work so valuable and fruitful.

Today we face a civilization which is notedly shallow, yet the situation is complex. Nearly everybody has received a High-school education and with it a smattering of diffuse information. A number of our young people are College graduates. To serve them all satisfactorily the pastor of today needs at least a College education as a basis for his studies in theology. That is what the great majority of our men lack. This fact places them under a handicap. Too often we are put on the defensive, which naturally weakens our effectiveness. In spite of this handicap our men quite uniformly succeed remarkably well in serving their churches. This would indicate that their native quality is of an exceptionally high grade. That this is actually the case the writer knows from personal observation. Our Evangelical men can easily hold their own and usually excel in competition with the average student at seminaries of other denominations.

As I see it, it is primarily our duty to support wholeheartedly the progressive plans of our Board for Educational Institutions which would bring our schools on a par with the best in the land. We should encourage the progressive work of our professors as they seek to raise the standard of the work offered in our educational institutions. We shall soon furnish our quota of men who can make valuable contributions to the religious life and thought of America.

Let our young men, however, who are to profit by the sacrifices which the men already in the harness must make for their welfare, remember that any condescending or overbearing attitude they might be tempted to assume toward us older men would surely not be in good taste. At any rate, the pastors working in the vineyard have gathered experience which is more important than theory, and for that should be respected and honored. On the other hand older men should meet students and young men with absolute confidence in their sincerity.

The Board of Religious Education is confronted with a tremendous task. The fathers undoubtedly succeeded in teaching religion more successfully than we can do that today. Only painstaking, systematic research, wise planning, careful and progressive development in the realm of religious education will enable us to bring this work again to the standard of effectiveness achieved by our fathers. Our modern public school system has made it impossible to use the methods of the past successfully and yet the success heretofore achieved with them challenges us to more effective work, even though we must blaze a new trail to reach the excellence of the old standard.

As we accentuate the hope for union among Protestantism we must not overlook the fact that the ideal expressed in our "Bekenntniss Paragraph" reflects a situation which existed in Germany over a century ago. It is entirely inadequate to meet the present-day needs of America, where the largest and most active branches in the Lord's vineyard trace the source of their peculiar type of denomination to the influence of the Westminster Confession and kindred documents, at least in so far as its doctrine distinguish and separate them from other church organizations.

As a matter of fact, the day when a union of Protestant forces might be established upon the basis of a common doctrine is passed. By many dogma is looked upon with a good deal of suspicion, emphasis being placed, however, upon religious life directly nourished by the "vine." Unite we must. Unity will probably come via the path of federation.

The plan for denominational organization appended to this paper is offered in the hope that it may point to the way along which our Synod may advance more successfully as it pursues its ideal to serve as a uniting force among Protestantism. This plan will not only make federation and eventual organic union easy and practicable without destroying the peculiar valuable elements found in the uniting branches, it ought also to help appreciably to develop a better esprit de corps, which we need so desperately in our own field if we are to cultivate that section of the Lord's vineyard which He assigned to us, as a heritage from our fathers, more successfully and commendably.

* * *

A study of the varied activities carried on by our Synod through the agency of its boards discloses that this work can be roughly divided into two general spheres. These we shall call: *Maintenance* and *Extension.*

The first group of activities is absolutely necessary for the very existence of our Synod. Unless this work prospers, even the local congregations must eventually die.

The second group is equally as important although slightly different in character. Unless these activities, which are carried on to extend the work of the denomination continue and flourish, the Synod and with it the local congregations will enter upon a path of retrogression which leads to the swamp of stagnation and ignominious decay.

To enable anyone who may be interested to gain a clear perspective of the proposed plan of organization and in order to save time, the writer has worked out a graph which shows in broad outline the main features of the scheme.

"WAYS and MEANS COMMITTEE"
or "EXECUTIVE BOARD"

A. Maintenance Activities (Budget $550,000)

1. *Board for Synodical Activities:* (Budget $200,000) Administration, Contingency Fund, Judiciary, Brotherhood, Women's Federation, Young People, Publishing, Literary Boards.

2. *Board for Educational Activities:* (Budget $200,000) Eden, Elmhurst, Oakwood, Robinson, Rel. Ed., Colleges of Federated Denominations.

3. *Pension Board* (Budget $150,000)

B. Extension Activities (Budget $560,000)

1. *General Board for Extension and Benevolence* (Budget $400,000 guarantee of 70% collection): City Extension, Rural Extension, Home Missions (Social Service), India, Honduras, Federated Charities Board an associated Member without participation in budget, Foreign fields of federated denominations.

2. *Expansion and Capital Investments* (Budget $160,000 but no guarantee): Board for Trusts and Endowments (No share in budget), Present Church Extension Board (this to grant help to foreign missions and social service as well as to city and rural extension), Capital Investments, Special Boards for "drives" as directed by General Conference.

Note: The "maintenance" figures mentioned above were arrived at more or less arbitrarily and are used only to secure greater clarity. They are based upon a somewhat obligatory assessment of $2.40 for each church member. (Ten cents per member to be kept each year by the respective districts.)

The figures for "extension" work are based upon a hoped-for free-will contribution made by the individual church at the rate of 20% of the amount it spends for current expenses.

These figures are by no means excessive. To actually give at that rate would necessitate no sacrifice on the part of any congregation or individual. Compared to the income of our members and the local churches the amount is negligible.

# WHY A DILEMMA?

T. J. Hermann

In a recent issue of this magazine appeared an article by one of the young pastors of our Synod, under the caption, "The Dilemma of an Eden Graduate." Now a dilemma is a necessary choice between equally undesirable alternatives. These are, according to the author of the aforementioned article, the embarrassment of trying to teach the doctrines of the Evangelical catechism, which he finds wanting, and the embarrassment of resorting to undelectable casuistry in an effort to "explain things" so as to bring them into conformity with modern conceptions. The reason for the dilemma is saddled onto the clash between the antiquated catechism and present-day liberated interpretation of Christian belief and doctrine.

May the suggestion be made in all charity that the cause for the dilemma may lie elsewhere; that it may be merely subjective and not objective at all and that hence, if any adjustment is necessary, it may be an adjustment of him who finds a dilemma rather than of that which appears to lead to a dilemma.

Youth is impetuous. It oftentimes accepts and rejects without the fine discrimination that is born of serious reflection and of careful judgment. It grows restive under authority and champs at the bit and would take it between its teeth and strike out for itself over new roads in defiance of anyone that seeks to guide it. Not that youth is to be condemned for this. It is good and necessary for the development of the man. And because of this trait youth also makes a valuable contribution toward the progress of the church, the Kingdom of God, and the world. But let impetuosity and restiveness be tempered with prudence and wise restraint lest we permit ourselves to be led into an utterly untenable position or find ourselves so deeply in the woods that in bewilderment and despair we lie down to die.

Our catechism stands in need of a revision. That fact is generally admitted, but whether this revision should be as radical as its critic impetuously demands that is quite another matter. It may be true that text books in public schools may not be used for longer than ten years in some of our states, but even a revision would not presume to alter the axiom that two times two is four, the definition that an adjective is a word that modifies a noun, the fact that Washington was the first president of the United States or that the Mississippi river flows into the Gulf of Mexico. It may be true that our catechism is a "stiff, technical, metaphysical, compendium of theology," but it is also true that no religious

teaching can hang in mid-air. It must have a foundation, whether that be the old theology or a new theology. Now the characteristic of all foundations is that they are "stiff" and of a very definite design, carefully measured by the square of logic and reared according the plummet of precise systematic thinking. If the unwise builder mistakes the foundation for a house and fails to build a beautiful superstructure upon it and is then dissatisfied with the kind of a house that the mere foundation affords to him and others, it is hardly the fault of the foundation. It may be true that our catechism violates some educational principles—as in matters of obsolete and unintelligible phraseology—but that is quite a different matter from the generalization that "there are scarcely any educational principles that our catechism does not violate." It is true that the "official doctrinal statement of our Synod should express the general or the majority confession of faith." The fact that a majority of our districts voted specifically that the catechism should be revised as to form but not as to content seems to indivate that it does just what its critic insists that it should do.

But coming to the specific exceptions to the doctrinal position of the catechism taken in the article at hand. An attempt at an apologetic might be prefaced by the observation, drawn from the writer's own experience, that lack of proper assimiliation of the large mass of knowledge that the young pastor brings with him to his work may lead him to dilemmas where later on he will find none. The fact that food that is rich in protein lies heavily on the stomach does not lead to the equally undesirable alternatives of either to stop eating or to have a surgical operation performed on the stomach. It simply means that one must give heavy food or a big dinner proper time to be digested and assimilated. Not that anyone, least of all a pastor, will ever come to the point where he can afford to stop searching and thinking and praying and where nothing will any longer be seen "in a mirror, darkly," but that little by little he will be given to know more fully, if but in part.

The article under consideration gives glaring evidence of the lack of assimilation of some of the things heard and entered into the note book at Eden. The writer does not presume to hold any brief for the faculty at Eden, but he fails to find any incongruity between what is purported to have been taught at that institution and the teachings of the catechism.

The statement that "it is needless for dogmatics to include a special doctrine of angels" is not an imperative demand that it should not and, least of all, that the catechism, which no Eden professor has ever recommended as a textbook on dogmatics, must not make any reference to angels.

"For if the divine image denotes the destiny of man and the capacity which he possesses therefor, there is certainly opposition to this destiny in a perverted direction of the will, and thus there is abuse of the capacity" is plainly no argument against the teaching of the catechism that "man lost the image of God", but rather a frank acknowledgment of the loss of the image of God on the part of man. That this loss was total and complete is not taught by our catechism, is not taught by Dr. Irion in his able exposition of the catechism, and has never been taught by any Evangelical pastor, who by the very nature of his work sets forth his faith in the possibility of the redemption of mankind.

"It is a mistake to regard sin essentially only from the point of view of something inherited and furthermore to explain this heritage as a heritage of guilt—", certainly does not stand opposed to what question 65 of our catechism teaches. Its critic seems to have overlooked the words, "essentially only" in the above quotation. That the catechism does not regard sin essentially only from this point of view is clearly indicated by the answer to the question that follows. And where is the catechism guilty of the declaration that original sin is guilt in the sense that actual sin makes men culpable?

"It is wrong to hold that all has its basis in the first sin," is to all appearances an elaboration of the above quotation and not a statement in opposition to the teaching of the catechism that actual sin grows out of the corruption and perversion of man's heart wherever and whenever the human will yields to these sinful proclivities and aids and abets them. The closing sentence of answer 66 of the catechism, which its critic merely indicates by the abbreviation "etc.". "The most grievous sins are those committed with malice aforethought," clearly takes into account "the immeasurable distinctions found among sinful men" and certainly goes to show that the evil that men do is regarded as "personal sin" by this textbook.

"His (Christ's) interposition before God in our favor does not consist of an act that has direct reference to God, but one which has in the first instance reference to us—". Certainly, "in our stead", as the second Adam. Where is there any discrepancy? The fact that a legalistic and magical interpretation of the redemption can be read into the answer of our catechism is hardly cause sufficient for rising in indignation against it. Do not Christian Scientists and Unitarians and Spiritualists also read their teachings and beliefs into the Bible? And yet we still uphold it as the basis of our faith. Besides, it is quite beside the point to dig up a reference to the philosophical interpretation of the redemption where

the validity of the answer to question 77 of the catechism is concerned. The question asked is, "*Whereby* did Christ accomplish the redemption?" The answer merely sets forth His suffering and death as this "whereby" and the fact of the redemption established in consequence of it. He who would therefore spend much time and effort in presenting a philosophical interpretation of the redemption to his confirmation class in connection with this answer would be shooting beside the mark, bewildering his pupils to the extent that the great vital fact of the redemption may be lost sight of and would, in consequence, be more unpedagogical than the catechism itself could ever be accused of being by even its severest critics. The redemption as an accomplished fact, that is the gospel that brings peace to the heart and incites to love toward Him who for love of us hung upon the tree, whether reason is able to conceive of it in all its depth and breadth and height or not.

Articles such as the one in which our catechism is severely taken to task should be written—but not for publication. They should be written and then carefully filed away in order to afford the author a starting point for subsequent reflection upon the subject under consideration and should be carefully revised from time to time in conformity with the author's growing understanding and experience. In the meantime the catechism may well be given the benefit of the doubt as being the product of rich and ripe experience and of clear and deep thinking and the expression of a faith well grounded in the word of God.

# PROMOTING THE PASTOR'S PENSION

Rev. H. L. Streich, Executive Secretary

"Was einer nicht weiss, macht ihn nicht heiss." This is a large reason why our people are little concerned about our Pastors' Pension and Relief. "My people perisheth for lack of knowledge," cries out the prophet. And our Pension Fund is suffering for lack of knowledge. Our people know so little or nothing about our pension system.

All our cry for larger pensions, bigger gifts, more interest for our aged pastors and their widows will remain unheard like they have these eighty-odd years unless we do more propaganda work. While other denominations are building up strong pension systems, increasing the amount paid yearly, we are still providing most miserably for our invalid and retired veterans and their devoted self-sacrificing widows.

Why? Because our people know so little about the needs, the amounts paid and what could and should be done by our congregations for their worn out pastors.

Ever since I have been in the ministry I have given this like other vital branches of our Church much attention. Every year at our congregational missionary institute Ministerial Relief received much definite attention. Facts and figures were presented. Posters illustrating the situation were placed before my people. What other churches were doing for their superannuated pastors was strongly presented in word and picture. Throughout the year literature on Ministerial Relief was distributed. An "Under-Shepherd" service was held. In short everything possible was done to acquaint my people with the exact facts of how *we treat our old veteran pastors*. The result was interest and readiness to give.

Since I am in my present position no one has done more to bring and keep the subject of Pastors' Pension and Relief before our Synod at large. And everywhere I find, what I discovered in my congregations, that our Evangelicals know little or nothing about this important subject, even as they know very little about any branch of our Church.

I claim that 95% of our people know very, very little about the exact situation regarding our whole Pension System. Over 50% know nothing. A large number read the terms "Pension Fund" or "Ministerial Relief" now and then, but just what it means is "Greek" to them.

This is proven by my question on the subject at conventions everywhere. I have made it my business to find out at every opportunity what our people know about their Church. Only a very, very few can tell anything about our Pension System. Most of the

folks confess they know nothing. A few will recall a collection taken for our old pastors and their widows once a year on Memorial Sunday. But hardly ever do I find a man or woman who can tell exactly what the system is and does for the superannuated. Ignorance prevails everywhere. And "was einer nicht weiss, macht ihn nicht heiss."

And let it be remembered that the attendance at these conventions is not only a cross-section, but above the average of our people They represent the most interested. People that will spend time and money to attend conventions are those who are concerned. Therefore if these know so little or nothing about our pension system, how much less the rest.

Indeed, I would challenge our pastors everywhere to put the test to their people some Sunday, asking how many can explain our pension system. You will not find 10% in the average church. Not even, I'm afraid, in the churches of the members of our Pension Board. Throughout the Synod you wouldn't find 2% of our churches in which a majority could intelligently explain the pension system.—I hope pastors will accept this challenge.

What's the trouble? *Too little or nothing is being done* to enlighten, inform our people about our provision or rather lack of provision for pensioned pastors.

We complain that our people are not interested, do so little for the aged pastors. Let me, speaking for the people, say and complain that too little or nothing is done to interest the people.

Every intelligent person knows that not only in business but also in church propaganda, publicity, presentation by word and picture is needed these days to arouse interest and enlist the public, whether in or out of church. And if some folks, especially those responsibile, do not know this fact, it's about time they woke up in this day and age. Churches as well as business houses today are using every possible means of presenting their wares and needs to the people. People are swamped with appeals and campaigns, and if you want their interest and help you must compete with all these present-day appeals to get your article across. Here is where we have failed in our pension fund. Lack of publicity, propaganda and effective presentation of the cause of "Ministerial Relief." In the way of propaganda and publicity, *our Pension Board is the most inefficient in the Synod.*

What are we doing or what have we ever done to interest our laity in the Pension cause? So little that we can hardly find it.

During the Forward Movement a bare, unattractive, meager little four-page folder was issued.

Once a year *one* article appears in our church papers, which,

however presupposes a reasonable acquaintance and interest in the subject. Often written for *Friedensboten* readers, but not for *Herald,* only translated. Few facts and figures, examples and comparisons given. And even though this *annual* article were effectively written, how many does it reach? Only 24,000 members or families, if you please, through the *Friedensbote,* and 11000 through the *Herald.* But what of the rest? Take for instance St. Louis. We have only 1400 readers of both papers. Let this represent families if you please. But how few that reaches with the large membership in our 30 churches. In Chicago we have less than 1000 readers of both papers. Here we have 35 large congregations, some claim 500-5000 families alone. How many does the annual article reach through the thousand papers that go to Evangelical Chicago, numbering tens of thousands of families? And this comparison holds good in every large center and in the average congregation. In other words, out of a possible 100,000-150,000 Evangelical families our church papers reach only 35,000 at the most. What is being done to make the rest of our constituency acquainted with the facts regarding Ministerial Relief? You usually get out of a thing what you put into it.

The only other means of publicity and propaganda used are the annual reports to the District conferences. Here, usually, only through the written reports, read by so few delegates, often not received by some: but rarely by a stated address or prepared discussion. At best the delegates go away with the unpleasant impression that here again is one more of the already too many causes *for which the ministers want more money.* But how many delegates received a clear picture of the actual need, with their heart warmed with interest and sympathy for this crying claim of an underpaid and neglected ministry? How many delegates go home and tell their people how shamefully Evangelical pastors are treated in old age?

Thus an annual article and report is practically all the publicity and propaganda in the interest of our Ministerial Relief and Pension. What right have we to expect greater interest and giving on the part of our people? "Was einer nicht weiss, macht ihn nicht heiss."

Am I wrong in calling our Pension Board the most inefficient in the Synod? Why does the work and needs of our foreign Missions receive the largest interest and liberal gifts? They are best known. And why best known? Because of the large and everlasting, manifold publicity and propaganda by the Board of Foreign Missions.—"It pays to advertise."

During the past five years I have conducted five national con-

ventions of Brotherhood, League, and Women's Union. Three to six months before such national conventions I have written to every Board asking for exhibits and offering opportunity for presentation of their causes. Never once has literature or exhibits on our Ministerial Relief been provided, nor opportunity asked to present the subject. Here were unusual opportunities to bring before the lay leaders of our Church the crying needs of our aged pastors.

Neither have I ever seen any literature or exhibits at any of our several Summer Training Schools where the flower of our youth and the future leadership of our church gathers year after year. "Wer die Jugend hat, hat die Zukunft."

How glad I and many others would be to distribute literature on the subject but there isn't a scrap available. I have again put the subject of "Ministerial Relief" in next year's "Monthly Program." What an opportunity it will be to present the cause to our people. Will there be any material ready?

We cannot go on like this, if we expect greater interest and larger giving for our Pension Fund. If we would not receive the profits from Eden Publishing House, where would our Fund be today? Other denominations are establishing large Pension Funds provided by their people being *well informed and constantly reminded.* We too must do more propaganda work and advertise.

I was and still am in favor of a special financial campaign for our Ministreial Relief and Pension Fund. Other churches have and are doing it, and we will also have to make special appeals for gifts, especially large ones. It was a surprise and disappointment to me that the Pension Board had not prepared and presented a determined fight at the last General Conference, supported by at least the aged clerical delegates, for a financial campaign. Here again, apparently, the Board took it for granted that everybody would be interested and support the worthy cause. But here like every other time, they learned—or perhaps they didn't—that preparation, propaganda, and publicity are needed.

While a financial campaign is out of question for the present, our whole past experience and present lack of interest and support cries for very definite effective propaganda and publicity in the interest of Ministerial Relief and Pension. The Pension Board could render no greater service to the cause in the next years than to carry on *an educational* campaign. Spoken and written work, posters, pamphlets and pictures, indeed every means should be employed to acquaint every last Evangelical man, woman, and child about the condition and need of our Pension Fund, and to inspire them to greater interest and giving for same.

To do this we will need even more than pamphlets, articles,

addresses, and the like, in and out of season. We will need to put this branch of our Church, like all others, *into the regular curriculum of our educational system* all the way from the Beginner's Department up through the Adult groups in every congregation. Our church activities must no longer be left to the wish and whim, interest or indifference of our pastors and people, but become *an integral part* of the Sunday school lessons, confirmation instruction, League topics, Brotherhood and Women's Union "Monthly Programs," as well as of an annually prepared and presented "Monthly Promotional Program" by the Church at large. We must work our "Church at Work" program into a regular graded educational system for our whole constituency. Our Beginners as well as our adults should regularly learn about our Ministerial Relief as well as all other branches of our synodical work. Only in this way will we reach all.—*all the time*. Our whole promotional policy needs revision. It must become a *regular* not optional part of the educational program of every Evangelical church. Sunday school teachers must teach about Ministerial Relief, Home Mission, Eden Elmhurst, and all the other branches of our work as naturally and regularly as he teaches the Bible stories or lessons. Every Brotherhood, League, and Women's organization must discuss these church activities as regularly and naturally as they discuss their annual banquet, play or "Coffee." Here is where we have failed and are still failing. We are not utilizing our organization, Sunday school and confirmation classes for synodical and Kingdom education, and training. Not till we do this systematically and educationally will we succeed in interesting all our people either in Ministerial Relief or any other branch of our Church.

Besides thus putting the subject of Pastors' Pensions into a regular, graded all-year-round educational program, we will still need to publish special, attractive, effective leaflets on the subject. Regular articles will need to appear in our church papers, conventions, Summer schools, institutes, conferences, Evangelical Days or Weeks used for presentation of the cause by spoken word, posters, pictures and every possible form of presentation. Here is where we can begin at once until the needed graded educational system can be introduced. Here is the place for the Pension Board to begin at once, while working for the other. Give us more publicity. Carry on more propaganda. Publish some pamphlets. Inaugurate an editorial campaign for our Ministerial Relief and Pension Fund.

Perhaps, to do this we will need to call in a church publicity expert. Personally, we are convinced this will be needed. In any event, let us promote our Pastors' Pension Fund.

# Unsre Kirche und der Modernismus.

Pastor G. Fr. Schuetze, S. T. M.

Angeregt durch eine Debatte auf der letztjährigen Distriktskonferenz des Wisconsin-Distrikts, möchte ich mir erlauben, in nachfolgenden Zeilen einige Gedanken zu diesem gewiß aktuellen Thema zur allgemeinen Debatte zu stellen, und zwar möchte ich zunächst das Thema etwas allgemeiner fassen und über die christliche Kirche im Allgemeinen handeln, ehe ich mich an mein eigentliches Thema, „Unsre" Kirche heranmache.

In dem Satz „die Kirche und der Modernismus" liegt ausgesprochen, daß diese beiden in irgendeiner Beziehung zueinander stehen müssen. Dieses Verhältnis ist keineswegs die Identität, auch nicht die Relation des Ganzen zum Teil, sondern das Verhältnis des Gegensatzes. Ich vermute und erwarte, daß dieser Thesis widersprochen wird, und daß die Antithesis „Der Modernismus ist ein vollberechtigter Teil oder Strömung in der christlichen Kirche" gegen meinen Satz aufgestellt wird. Wohl wahr, der Modernismus liebt es, sich als eine berechtigte Partei innerhalb der evangelischen Kirche zu gerieren und wird von vielen gedankenlos als solche angenommen.

In Wahrheit ist der Modernismus nicht eine Partei **innerhalb** der Kirche, etwa ein dem großen Kreis der Kirche konzentrischer kleiner Kreis, sondern eine zentrifugale Kraft, die einstweilen noch nicht an die Peripherie des Kreises gelangt ist und anscheinend auch nicht besonders darum bemüht ist, dahin zu gelangen, die aber ihrem **ganzen** Wesen nach danach angelegt ist, diesen Kreis zu durchbrechen und sich **außerhalb** desselben zu entwickeln.

Gegen Angriffe von außen ist die christliche Kirche noch von je her mit Gottes Hilfe imstande gewesen, und ist es auch jetzt noch, sich mit gutem Erfolg zu wehren. Aber gegen den heimlichen Feind im Innern, gegen die Pestilenz, die im Finstern schleichet, gegen den unter der falschen Flagge „Neue Bahnen für alte Wahrheiten" segelnden Modernismus ist die Kirche solange machtlos und wird es bleiben, als sie nicht sein innerstes Wesen erkennt — welches das ist, werden wir später sehen — und sich von ihm in reinlicher Scheidung trennt.

Ganghofer sagt einmal irgendwo: „Ein reiner Tisch ist immer ein wertvolles Stück Hausrat." Nun wohl, es gilt reinen Tisch zu machen zwischen der Kirche Christi und der Kirche des „Ich," dem Modernismus. Sie gehören einmal nicht zusammen und können in alle Ewigkeit nicht zusammengehören. Möge mir niemand entgegenhalten: Wir sollen doch tolerant sein! Dem entgegen antworte ich: Nein, nein und tausendmal nein. Was hat Christus gemein mit Belial? Der Herr sagt: Hütet euch vor dem Sauerteig der Pharisäer! Die Wahrheit und das Licht können nimmermehr tolerant

sein. Tolerante Wahrheit, das ist ein Widerspruch in sich selbst, etwa wie „Dunkelheit ertragendes Licht." Wir können und sollen den Irrenden tolerieren, solange noch eine Hoffnung ist, ihn von der Wahrheit zu überzeugen, aber nimmermehr den Irrtum selbst. Irren ist menschlich, den Irrtum erkennen und lassen, ist himmlisch, im erkannten Irrtum verharren, ist teuflisch. Der Modernismus ist aber nichts weiter als ein ungeheurer Irrtum, weil er dem ganzen Wesen der christlichen Kirche schnurstracks zuwiderläuft.

Sehen wir auf die **Wurzeln**, aus denen der Modernismus entspringt, so wollen wir von der menschlichen Sünde als ganz selbstverständlich absehen, denn daß Sünde eine Wurzel des Irrtums ist, ergibt sich aus Eph. 4, 22 deutlich. Jedoch wir wollen die Kategorieen des Fühlens und Wollens einstweilen aus der Verhandlung ausmerzen und uns auf das Denken beschränken.

Das führt uns zunächst auf das Gebiet der Philosophie. Die Philosophie lehrt denken. Dadurch hat sie einen großen und leider sehr selten segensreichen Einfluß auf die christliche Erkenntnis gehabt. Wir wollen nicht weiter auf den Gnostizismus eingehen, der bei unbefangener Betrachtung sich als eine Verquickung heidnischer Philosophie und christlicher Wahrheit darstellt, sehr zum Schaden der letzteren, die dadurch fast bis zur Unerkenntlichkeit verzerrt wurde. Die unheilvollen Folgen des Gnostizismus und die harten Kämpfe, die es der christlichen Kirche kostete, ihn auszuscheiden, sind ja jedem Theologen sattsam bekannt. Auch den Scholastizismus, der ja eine Anwendung platonischer und später aristotelischer Philosophie auf das Christentum ist, brauchen wir nur zu erwähnen und können uns gleich zur neueren Philosophie wenden. Auch hier sind die Einflüsse der Philosophie auf die christliche Lehre unstreitbar. Wer zum Beispiel, wie Spinoza, sein Denken auf den Naturalismus eingestellt hat und die zeitliche Schöpfertätigkeit Gottes leugnet, der kann unmöglich die biblische Stellung zur Lehre vom Vater einnehmen. Oder nimmt man mit Leibnitz an, daß jede der unzähligen Monaden, aus denen das All und also auch der Mensch besteht, eine kleine Gottheit für sich in ihrem Bereich ist, so wird man vergeblich diese Theorie mit der Bibellehre von dem **einen**, allmächtigen Gott zu vereinen suchen.

Ich greife aufs Geratewohl einige weitere Beispiele der neueren Philosophie heraus. Wohin der Einfluß eines Hegel die Theologie geführt hat, zeigt das Beispiel zweier seiner Schüler, Ludwig Feuerbach und David Strauß.

Ersterer stellt in seinem „Wesen des Christentums" folgende Sätze auf:

> "Onthropology is the secret of theology. God is man worshipping himself. The Trinity is the human family deified" (Vgl. Weber: History of Philosophy, p. 562, Note 1.)

Wie schädlich Strauß durch sein „Leben Jesu" gewirkt hat, das bedarf keiner weiteren Auseinandersetzung.

Oder nehmen wir den Materialismus, der die Seele leugnet, der alle geistige Tätigkeit auf chemische Prozesse im Gehirn zurückführt, so die Willensfreiheit leugnet und den Menschen zu einer Maschine reduziert („de la Mettrie"), wie können wir da eine wahrheitsentsprechende Stellung zur biblischen Lehre von der Sünde und der Erlösung erwarten? Nun ist doch nicht zu leugnen, daß die Philosophie der Jetztzeit zum größten Teil materialistisch ist. Wenn nun gar in aller neuster Zeit in unserm eigenen Land ein Denker wie John Dewey erklärt: Religion ist nur für Kinder, ein Mann, der glaubt, ist nicht zurechnungsfähig, dann ist es sonnenklar, daß eine von solcher Philosophie beeinflußte Theologie nimmermehr die des Neuen Testaments sein kann. Wie recht mahnt Paulus den Timotheus vor der falsch berühmten Kunst (der Philosophie).

Den Einwand, daß Theologie und Kirche nicht identisch sind, daß man also innerhalb der Kirche sein und doch nicht mit ihrer Theologie übereinzustimmen brauche, weise ich zurück unter Berufung auf die Definition der Kirche. Die Kirche ist „ihrem Wesen nach die Gemeinschaft der Gläubigen im Heiligen Geist" (Kahnis), „die Gemeinschaft der Teilhaber am Heil in Christo" (Zoeckler).

> "Congregatio sanctorum, in qua evangelium recte docetur et recte administrantur sacramenta (C. A. VII.)," "Congregatio sanctorum et vere credentium" (C. A. VIII).

Nach diesen Definitionen ergibt es sich von selber, daß der Modernismus, der das Evangelium nicht rein und recht lehrt, auch nicht zur christlichen Kirche gehört, wenn er sich auch äußerlich noch nicht von ihr getrennt haben mag.

Weiter müssen wir nun auch allerdings eine falsche Einstellung des Willens als eine Wurzel des Modernismus annehmen. Der Jahresbericht unsrer Behörde für Religiöse Erziehung charakterisiert diese Strömung in ganz vortrefflicher Weise (Vgl. Berichte 1926, Seite 117). Nachdem er die Notwendigkeit des Hungerns und Dürstens nach Gottes Gerechtigkeit betont hat, fährt er fort:

> "Why, such a suggestion is greeted with contempt, if not with cynical amusement. Is not this the very thing we have been trying to get away from . . . this "inferiority complex"? What man needs is greater self-confidence, not less. Man does not need God—not really need him—except perhaps as a convenient term. . . . Prayer changes nothing objectively! Give a man knowledge, and he becomes divine."

So charakterisiert der Bericht die modernistische Theologie in ihrer Erscheinung, die auf die Wurzel zurückführt, welche die Bibel angibt in den Worten: Wir **wollen** nicht, daß dieser über uns

herrsche (Lukas 19, 14), wir wollen lieber „build us a tower that shall reach heaven."

In diesen zwei Wurzeln denn, dem falschen Denken in der Philosophie und dem falschen Wollen im Unglauben der Selbstvergötterung, liegen die Ursprünge des Modernismus.

Was nun die **Erscheinung** des Modernismus angeht, so werden wir uns darauf beschränken müssen, die Hauptlehren, an denen die Modernisten („früher nannte man sie die Ungläubigen," Frau Em. Schaefer) besonderen Anstoß nehmen, kurz zu skizzieren. Wenn ich recht sehe, sind es einerseits die wahre und volle Gottheit Jesu Christi und anderseits die wahre und volle Unfähigkeit des Sünders, sich selbst zu erlösen, oder in eins zusammengezogen die alte Frage: Wie dünket euch um Christo, wes Sohn ist er? Von der rechten Beantwortung dieser Frage ist ja das ganze System der Dogmatik abhängig. Mit diesem Wort nun stoßen wir dem Modernismus gehörig vor den Kopf. Was Dogmatik! Wir wollen eben keine von Menschen gemachten Dogmen, gebt uns ein undogmatisches Christentum! Da scheiden sich dann die Wege. Dogmen sind an der Bibel begründete, wenn auch durch Menschen in verstandesmäßige Form gegossene Glaubenssätze, dann sind sie eben nicht „menschliche" Dogmen, oder sie sind nicht in der Bibel begründet und dann eben keine Dogmen. Zum Beispiel verwirft die evangelische Kirche die Lehren vom Fegefeuer oder von der Infallibilität des Papstes und wird sie nie als Dogmen anerkennen, weil es Menschenfündlein und nicht in der Bibel begründete Wahrheiten sind. Anderseits würden wir die Lehre von der göttlichen Dreieinigkeit auch dann noch als Dogma glauben müssen, wenn das „Symbolum Quicunque" nie geschrieben wäre. Der Modernismus aber schwärmt für „undogmatisches Christentum," weil ihm das so am besten in seinen Kram paßt; denn auf diese Weise könnte ein jeder lehren, was und wie er wollte. Damit würde man aber nach der Weise der Quäker das „Innere Licht" über die Offenbarung Gottes stellen, und die evangelische Gewissensfreiheit würde zur schrankenlosen Willkür.

Daher stammen denn auch die vielen Kämpfe um das Apostolikum in der Neuzeit. Das Apostolikum ist aber nächst der Bibel der feste Grenzwall der Kirche, der sie scharf von allen außerhalb stehenden absondert. Gegenüber der Forderung nach einem undogmatischen Christentum muß die Kirche entschieden streng konfessionell sein. Zwar nicht so, daß wir ein Spezialbekenntnis, wie die U. A. C. oder die „Helvetica" als wesentlich für den Bestand der Kirche ansehen, aber **ein** Bekenntnis muß da sein, sonst wird aus der festumrissenen „Congregatio sanctorum" eine verschwommene Idee, in der sich Fundamentalisten und Modernisten mit gleichem Rechte breit machen können. Es hieße nun dem Modernismus viel

zu viel Ehre erweisen, wollten wir ihm gegenüber unsre Position dogmatisch verteidigen. Es wird vielmehr an ihm sein, sein Recht innerhalb der Kirche dogmen-historisch nachzuweisen; wir aber stellen uns schlicht auf den Standpunkt, daß wir sagen: Hier ist die Bibel, hier das Bekenntnis der Kirche; das ist unsre Stellung, und nun komme an, wer gegen sie anrennen will. Aber dann wenigstens ehrlich von außen her, und nicht als Wölfe in Schafskleidern sich in die Herde einschleichen und dann der Kirche von hinten den Dolchstoß in den Rücken versetzen. Dadurch, daß der Modernismus, trotzdem er die Kirche bis aufs Messer bekämpft, dennoch in ihr bleiben will, zeigt er, auf wie schwachen Füßen sein undogmatisches, ethisches Christentum steht. Würde es ihm doch sonst zeigen, wie verächtlich und unehrlich seine Position ist. Wir gestehen dem Modernisten ja ganz gewiß das Recht seiner freien Gewissensüberzeugung ohne Weiteres zu; aber wen sein Gewissen zwingt, die Lehren der christlichen Kirche anzugreifen, der sollte auch die Konsequenz ziehen und den Mut haben, es frei herauszusagen und aus der Kirche auszutreten. Es bleibt nun einmal eine fundamental verschiedene Lehre, wenn man Christi Gottheit nicht anerkennt und ihn zu einem bloßen Menschen degradiert. Aber es scheint, als ob der Modernismus die „goldene Mittelstraße" liebt. Jesus soll auf das menschliche Niveau heruntergezogen und der Mensch, das „Ich" zu göttlicher Höhe hinaufgeschraubt werden. Das ist alles andre, nur nicht christlich.

Auch im praktischen, täglichen Leben wird das Glaubensleben eines Modernisten himmelweit verschieden sein von dem eines Christen. In der Kirche heißt das Feldgeschrei, unter dem der Mensch in den täglichen Kampf wider die Sünde zieht: Aus Gnaden allein, durch Jesu Christi Blut, und von drüben schallt die Antwort zurück: Work out your own salvation!

In der praktischen Thelogie erkennen wir den Unterschied zwischen Kirche und Modernismus in der Behandlung der Predigt. Die Kirche legt mit vollstem Recht den ganzen energischen Nachdruck auf die Verkündigung der Gnade in Wort und Sakrament und läßt alle andern Tätigkeiten der Kirche erst in zweiter und dritter Linie erscheinen, wogegen der Modernismus alle möglichen Aufgaben der Kirche höher zu schätzen und mehr zu pflegen scheint als ihre alte, ihr von Christo gegebene Devise: „Prediget das Evangelium."

Man sehe sich doch eine moderne Kirche an. Sie enthält vor allen Dingen eine Küche, dann einen Banketsaal, eine Theaterbühne, Gymnasium, Bibliothek, Klubräume, Kegelbahnen, Billiardtische, Tennisplätze, und was weiß ich, ja wohl auch noch Sonntagschulklassenräume. Alle diese Einrichtungen werden auf das beste eingerichtet und auf das fleißigste benützt, aber — die Hauptsache, das Auditorium, der gottesdienstliche Predigtsaal, erschreckt uns sonntäglich durch gähnende Leere. Und was empfangen die Wenigen,

die Sonntags noch kommen? Die Kirche hat ja so viele Spezialaufgaben, da sind so viele Extrasonntage:

| | |
|---|---|
| Mothers' day | Labor day |
| Fathers' and Sons' day | Go-to-church-day |
| Armistice day | International friendship day |

und wie sie alle heißen, daß für die Verkündigung des uralten Evangeliums keine Zeit übrig bleibt. Schreiber dieser Zeilen hatte vor Jahren einmal mit dem Ergouverneur Hoard von Wisconsin eine Debatte, in der dieser allen Ernstes behauptete, die Kirche Jesu Christi habe sich überlebt, man solle sie lieber in einen "Current Event Club" verwandeln. Da haben wir den Modernismus in Reinkultur. In Rücksicht auf die bestehende soziologische Tendenz, die jetzt in der Kirche sich breit macht, ist es mir immer als bedeutsam erschienen, daß der erste Mann, der die Erhebung der Soziologie zum Rang einer Wissenschaft befürwortete, der französische Philosoph Comte war, derselbe Mann, der die Theologie als die niedrigste Stufe des menschlichen Denkens bezeichnete.

So erhebt sich die Frage: Kann die christliche Kirche **solchen** Modernismus noch als eine berechtigte Strömung in ihr selbst anerkennen? Und wenn nicht, wie kann sie sich seines erwehren?

Ich meine, wir müssen da Unterschiede machen. Die Zeiten ändern sich und wir mit ihnen. Eisenbahn, Telephon, Automobil, alles das sind moderne Erscheinungen, die sich die Kirche dankbar zu nutze gemacht hat, und ohne die sie einfach nicht mehr bestehen kann. So dürfen wir nicht **allen** Modernismus in Bausch und Bogen ohne Weiteres verdammen, sondern müssen dem Zeitgeist auch Rechnung tragen in der Verwaltung und den Methoden der **äußerlichen** Verwaltung der Kirche. Wir wollen sogar noch weiter gehen und eine gewisse Modernisierung in der Form als berechtigt zugestehen. Luthers Bibelübersetzung mußte der revidierten Ausgabe Platz machen, die King James Version den Platz vor der American Standard räumen. Der Nebraska-Distrikt hat dies in folgender Weise formuliert: „Ebenso erkennt er die Notwendigkeit an, den evangelischen Glauben in einer unsrer Zeit verständlichen Weise wie auch in Uebereinstimmung mit der Ausdrucksweise der besten Denker der Gegenwart Ausdruck zu verleihen." Also, wie gesagt, ein solcher Modernismus, der circum sacra geht, ist wohl berechtigt, und kann man sich denselben gefallen lassen, aber ein Modernismus in sacris, **nie!**

Wie sich aber seiner erwehren? Ich glaube nicht an Ketzerprozesse, um die Ausscheidung der Modernisten zu erzwingen. Das wäre gleichbedeutend mit dem Zugeständnis, daß die Kirche daran verzweifelt, ihn in der Kraft des Geistes zu überwinden. Vielmehr wird es Sache aller Glieder der wahren Kirche sein, das munus

elenchthicum des Heiligen Geistes walten zu lassen und deshalb nicht aufzuhören mit Wort und Schrift Zeugnis abzulegen gegen die Gefahr, die im Modernismus der Kirche droht. Gleichzeitig aber soll man es den Herren vom linken Flügel nahe legen, **aus** der Kirche auszutreten. Im „Friedensboten" vom 20. Juni 1926 lese ich „sind die Modernisten unter den Predigern der südlichen Methodisten kurzerhand aufgefordert worden, aus dieser Kirche auszutreten." Sollte das einen Zwang zum Austritt bedeuten, so wäre es meines Erachtens verfehlt; ist es aber nur ein Appell an das Gewissen, so ist er nicht mehr als berechtigt. Wenn die Modernisten so sicher sind, daß sie das reine Evangelium vertreten, dann sollen sie doch den Rubikon überschreiten und eine eigene Kirche gründen. An ihren Früchten werden wir sie dann erkennen. Laß sehen, ob sie mit ihrer fadenscheinigen menschlichen Weisheit den Erfolg bei der hungernden Masse der Gottsucher finden werden. Das ist ja gerade die Unaufrichtigkeit, gegen welche die Kirche protestiert und protestieren muß, daß den heilsverlangenden Seelen anstatt der kräftigen Speise des Wortes Gottes eine dünne Wassersuppe menschlicher Theorien und Meinungen vorgesetzt wird. Die Modernisten wissen sehr wohl, daß ihre Kraft als kirchenbildende und kirchenerhaltende Wahrheit schmählich versagen würde darum kriechen sie nur zu gerne unter die schirmenden Flügel der Mutter Kirche, und suchen sie doch zu zerstören. Also reinliche Scheidung, ihr Herren Modernisten. Ist euer Werk von Gott, so wird es bestehen, wie wir vertrauen, daß die Kirche bestehen wird und muß.

Kommen wir nun zu dem Spezialthema: **Unsre** Kirche und der Modernismus, so ist ja unsre Evangelische Synode von Nord-Amerika, Gott sei es gedankt, offiziell noch unter den positiven Kirchen der Neuzeit aufzuzählen. Gewiß ist der Beschluß eines Distriktes nur zu billigen, der mit dem ehrwürdigen Synodalpräses sich dazu bekennt, „daß vor allem das unerschütterliche Festhalten an dem lebendigen Christus und seinem treuen Evangelium und an dem großen Predigtthema des Meisters: ‚Tut Buße, denn das Himmelreich ist nahe herbeigekommen,' unerläßlich ist." Wie gesagt, so stehen wir noch offiziell — aber leuchten nicht schon die Anzeichen eines drohenden Sturmes herauf? Ist es nicht schon vorgekommen und auf der letzten Generalkonferenz zur Sprache gebracht, daß ein jung ins Amt tretender Pastor das Apostolikum nicht als eigene Ueberzeugung, sondern nur aus Achtung vor den Vätern bekannt hat? Soll nicht der Logenparagraph seinen bindenden Charakter verlieren? Ist es nicht schon offen ausgesprochen, daß man in Elmhurst als Religionslehrer keinen „extremen Fundamentalisten" wünsche? Was soll das heißen? Man ist entweder ein Fundamentalist, das heißt einer, der an der **ganzen** geoffenbarten Wahrheit Gottes festhält, oder man ist es eben nicht, dann

ist man ein Modernist. Verschiedene Grade und Stufen des Fundamentalismus kann es doch nicht geben. Man steht entweder auf dem Grunde (Fundament) der Apostel und Propheten oder man steht nicht darauf. Extrem, soll das darauf hindeuten, daß man vielleicht mit einem Fuß nur darauf stehen will und mit dem andern — —, ja worauf denn? Mit dem andern in der Luft schweben, oder auf dem Sand (Matth. 7, 26)? Da sei Gott vor! Aber sollen wir die Augen schließen und die Zeichen der Zeit nicht sehen?

Was vorhin von der christlichen Kirche im allgemeinen gesagt wurde, müssen wir im besondern auf unsre eigene Kirche anwenden, besonders da wir evangelisch sind. Evangelisch — hat unser ehrwürdiger Synodalpräses einmal gesagt , mehr können wir nicht, und weniger wollen wir nicht sein. Dann aber laßt uns auch festhalten an dem Bekenntnis zu und an der Predigt von dem Evangelium Jesu Christi, wie es in unserm wundervollen Bekenntnisparagraphen zum Ausdruck kommt. Darin liegt unsre Existenzberechtigung und unsre Kraft. Würden wir von dem festen Glaubensgrunde abweichen zur Rechten oder Linken, so würden wir nicht nur unsre Kraft verlieren, mit der Gott bisher Großes gewirkt hat, sondern wir wären auch nicht mehr wert eine Kirche, viel weniger eine christliche, und noch viel weniger eine evangelische Kirche zu heißen. Dann könnten wir uns ebensogut mit einer der vielen Sekten des Landes verschmelzen. Unsre große Gabe aber und Aufgabe liegt in dem unerschütterlichen Festhalten am geoffenbarten Heil in Christo Jesu, unserm Heiland.

Zuletzt möchte man mich fragen: Ja, wer bist denn du, daß du hier so große Worte reden darfst? Bist du doch nur ein kleiner Dorfpfarrer in dem ohnehin als rückständig bekannten Wisconsin-Distrikt? Gehörst du doch nicht zu den maßgebenden und tonangebenden Persönlichkeiten unsrer Synode, wie darfst du so gegen deine eigne Kirche auftreten? Meine Antwort ist: Brüder, es ist alles wahr, was ihr mir vorhaltet; aber erstens bin ich einer, der seine Synode herzlich lieb hat und ihr Bestes mit ganzem Herzen sucht, und zum andern bestrebe ich mich als ein treuer Zeuge Jesu Christi erfunden zu werden, und deshalb kann ich um des Gewissens halber nicht anders, als meine mahnende Stimme zu erheben und zu bitten und zu warnen: Laßt uns halten an dem Bekenntnis und uns hüten vor dem Geist des Modernismus, der Gottes Herrschaft im Himmel und auf Erden zu untergraben droht. Möchte doch die Stimme des Predigers in der Wüste nicht ungehört verhallen!

# Die Erscheinung des Heils in der Person Christi.

Von Professor Dr. R. H. Grützmacher.

Mit der Behandlung der Person Jesu Christi wird der Mittelpunkt der christlichen Glaubenslehre erreicht. Die Frage nach Christus ist eine der ältesten, bleibt aber auch in unsern Tagen noch außerordentlich lebendig. Ihre Beantwortung erfolgt unter den mannigfaltigsten Gesichtspunkten, denn fast jede Partei und Richtung möchte den Namen Jesu auf ihre Fahne schreiben, weil sie dann erst ihres Sieges gewiß ist. So haben die einen Jesus zum Proletarierkönig gemacht, mindestens zum sozialen Reformator, die andern dagegen sehen in ihm die persönlichste aller Persönlichkeiten; den Dritten ist er der Lehrer innerweltlicher Tugend und Kultur, den Vierten ein weltabgewandter Mystiker und Aszet. Für die Dogmatik treten alle diese Gesichtspunkte zurück; sie sieht in Jesus Christus ausschließlich den Bringer und Vermittler des religiösen Heiles. Damit trifft sie den Kern seines Wesens, von dem aus alle andern Betrachtungsweisen beleuchtet und richtig gestellt werden müssen. Im Unterschied zu der theologischen Disziplin des „Leben Jesu," die den ganzen Umfang unsrer geschichtlichen Kenntnisse zu einem historischen Gesamtbild des Heilandes vereinigen will, wählt die dogmatische Christologie aus dem geschichtlichen Stoff nur diejenigen Züge aus, die Christus als den auch gegenwärtig noch lebendigen und wirksamen Heiland erkennen lassen. Die Dogmatik wird ihrer Aufgabe gerecht, wenn sie Folgendes bietet: I. Eine Darlegung des Selbstzeugnisses Jesu und der ersten Gemeinde, II. den Inhalt des kirchlichen Bekenntnisses, III. die religiöse Christuserfahrung, IV. die hauptsächlichsten dogmatischen Theorien der neueren Christologie, V. einen eigenen dogmatischen Versuch, VI. eine Erprobung dieser dogmatischen Auffassung an den Hauptzügen des geschichtlichen Bildes Jesu.

## I.

### Das Selbstzeugnis Jesu und der ersten Gemeinde.

Bei der Erhebung der neutestamentarischen Aussagen ist der Offenbarungs**geschichtliche** Charakter der biblischen Ueberlieferung besonders im Gedächtnis zu behalten, da sich dann eine Reihe von Bedenken und Mißverständnissen sofort heben. Jesus Christus hat selbst nur allmählich den vollen Gehalt seines Wesens erschlossen und auch seine Jünger und die erste Gemeinde haben ihm erst nach und nach immer höhere Prädikate beigelegt, entsprechend den stetig reicheren Wirkungen, die sie von ihm empfingen. Infolgedessen haben gleiche Formeln im neuen Testament nicht an allen Stellen den gleichen Gehalt, noch viel weniger aber ist der Sinn, den eine

Formel in vorchristlicher Zeit oder in der Volksvorstellung hatte, identisch mit dem Sinn des neutestamentlichen Zeugnisses — eine von religionsvergleichender Seite öfter übersehene, wichtige methodische Erkenntnis. Unter diesen Gesichtspunkten werden auch die unleugbaren Unterschiede zwischen der synoptischen und johanneischen Christologie verständlicher. Während die Synoptiker überwiegend vom Standort des geschichtlichen Christus seine objektiv wie subjektiv steigende Offenbarung und Entwicklung bis zum Erhöhten betrachten, stellt Johannes den geschichtlichen Lebensstil Christi in das Licht des Erhöhten und der von ihm ausgegangenen Wirkung, indem er in allen Anfängen schon die Vollendung erfaßt. Da aber der ganze und wirkliche Christus nur der geschichtliche und der lebendige ist, kommen beide Ueberlieferungstypen für die Dogmatik in gleicher Weise in Betracht.

Die **volle Menschheit** Jesu ist für die Schrift eine selbstverständliche Tatsache. Der Herr besitzt Leib, Seele, Geist und darum auch alle menschlichen Bedürfnisse und Regungen Leibes und der Seele. Jesus gewinnt sein Weltverständnis auf den gewöhnlichen menschlichen Erkenntniswegen des Lernens und Beobachtens, wodurch ein Nochnichtwissen, ja nach Markus 11, 13 ein Irrtum in einer äußerlichen Beobachtung nicht ausgeschlossen ist. Die Identität der Menschheit Jesu mit der unsern reicht noch viel tiefer, denn ihm eignet Leidens- und Sterbensfähigkeit, ja auch auf sittlich religiösem Gebiet ist er zunächst den Menschen gleichgestellt. Jesus ist versuchbar (Matth. 4, 1; Luk. 4, 13; 22, 28; Hebr. 2, 18; 4, 15), er untersteht dem Gesetz Israels, dessen Erfüllung er lernt (Joh. 5, 30; Hebr. 5, 8). Er kann um die Einsicht in die besondre Form des göttlichen Willens in einer bestimmten Situation wie in Gethsemane ringen (Mark. 14, 32). Darum steht Jesus auch im Gebetsumgang mit dem Vater, ist ihm gegenüber demütig, und nennt den Vater größer als sich (Mark. 7, 34; Matth. 11, 19; Joh. 11, 41; 6, 17; 14, 28).

Auf Jesu Menschheit weißt auch der faßt nur in den Evangelien in Jesu eigenem Mund vorkommende — sehr verschieden aufgefaßte — Ausdruck **„der Menschensohn"** hin. Er kommt besonders häufig im Zusammenhang mit Hinweisen auf die Niedrigkeit und das Leiden Jesu vor und weißt damit ausdrücklich auf Jesaias 53 hin. In späterer Zeit deutet Menschensohn — mit starker Anlehnung an Daniel 7, 13 — allerdings auch darauf hin, daß diesem Menschensohn zugleich himmlische Herrlichkeit eignet, er eng mit Gott verbunden ist, zum Gericht wiederkommen wird, sodaß hier allmählich Menschensohn zu einer verhüllten Messiasbezeichnung wird. So vollzieht sich in diesem Ausdruck der Uebergang von der Bezeugung der Menschheit Jesu zu der Verkündigung ihrer übermenschlichen Züge.

**Jesu Besonderheit** liegt deutlich zunächst auf sittlich religiösem Gebiet. Er besitzt eine eigenartige Gotteserkenntnis und zwar auf Grund innerer Gottesanschauung und steht in ununterbrochener Gottesgemeinschaft dadurch, daß er in vollkommener Weise, den Willen Gottes erfüllt (Matth. 3, 15; 11, 27; Joh. 4, 34; 17, 4). Wider die Vollkommenheit von Jesu Gottes Erkenntnis spricht nicht das von ihm selbst konstatierte — ausnahmsweise — Nichtwissen von **Zeit und Stunde** des Weltgerichtes (Matth. 13, 32; Apg. 1, 7). Denn dabei handelt es sich um irdische Zeitmaße, die von der innerweltlichen Entwicklung abhängen, nicht aber um eine aus Gottes Wesen sich ergebende Erkenntnis. Bei dieser Sachlage ist es auch nicht wahrscheinlich, daß Jesus selbst bestimmte Angaben über den genauen irdischen Zeitpunkt seiner Wiederkunft gemacht haben soll.

Auf Grund der tatsächlichen Ueberwindung der auch für ihn durchaus ernstlichen Versuchung erscheint Jesus in seinem eigenen Urteil wie in dem des gesamten Neuen Testaments als **sündlos und heilig** (Matth. 4, 11; Joh. 14, 30; 8, 46; Hebr. 4, 15; 7, 26; 1. Petri 2, 22; 1. Joh. 3, 5; Röm. 8, 3; 2. Kor. 5, 21). In dieser ethischen Einzigartigkeit unterscheidet sich Jesus eben so von allen sündigen Menschen, wie er sich mit dem heiligen Gott zusammenschließt. Auf Grund dieser absoluten religiösen und sittlichen Vollkommenheit hält Jesus sich für berechtigt, von allen Menschen seine Nachfolge und wahren Glauben an sich zu beanspruchen in dem gleichen Sinn, wie sie sonst nur Gott gewährt werden. Jesus stellt seine Autorität nicht bloß derjenigen gewöhnlicher Menschen gegenüber, sondern auch über die der höchsten Offenbarungsträger einer früheren Zeit, wie des Moses und Davids. Er will der Träger und Vermittler aller im Alten Testament Gott allein zugesprochenen Heilsgaben wie der Sündenvergebung und des Geistes sein und identifiziert die von ihm vertretene Sache — das Reich Gottes — ganz mit seiner Person.

Infolge aller dieser Eigenschaften und Vollmachten ist Jesus für die, welchen es Gott offenbart, der verheißene **Messias**, der Gesalbte, der Heilige Gottes, der Stifter des neuen Bundes (Matth. 16, 16; 26, 64; Joh. 6, 68; Apg. 2, 36; Hebr. 1, 9). Den Zusammenhang mit der theokratischen Messianität stellt die — aber auch schon nicht rein physisch aufgefaßte — **Davidsohnschaft** her. Jesus ist nach der Darstellung der Geburtsgeschichten bei Matthäus und Lukas der rechtliche Sohn eines Davididen, weil er diesem ehelich, wenn auch nicht leiblich in der Stadt Davids geboren wurde. Die politische Auffassung der Davidsohnschaft des Messias durch das Volk lehnte Jesus ab und sah in ihr überhaupt nicht das eigentlich entscheidende Element seines Wesens (Matth. 22, 45). Dieses liegt vielmehr in der besonderen Beziehung seines Wesens zu Gott. Sie

wird schon durch seine eigenartige Geburt gestiftet, indem er aus heiligem Geist von der Jungfrau Maria geboren wird und infolgedessen Sohn Gottes genannt werden soll. Der Ausdruck „**Sohn Gottes**" bezeichnet zunächst im Anschluß an das Alte Testament (2. Moses 4, 22; 2. Sam. 7, 14) den menschlichen Gegenstand besonderer göttlicher Erwählung und Liebe (Joh. 10, 34). Er ist sodann Wechselbegriff für Messias, der in einzigartiger Beziehung zu Gott als Ausrichter seines Heilswerkes steht (Matth. 16, 16). Endlich aber drückt Sohn Gottes die vollkommene — metaphysische — Wesensgemeinschaft mit Gott aus im Sinn einer vollkommenen ewigen Wissens- und Willens- und darum auch Seinsgemeinschaft (Matth. 11, 27; 28, 19; Joh. 3, 16; 5, 26; 20, 31; 1. Joh. 4, 9; Röm. 8, 33; Hebr. 5, 8). Das göttliche Element in Christus wird aber auch in einer Reihe von neutestamentlichen Stellen in dem Besitz des Heiligen Geistes ohne Maß gesehen, der Jesu innersten ewigen Wesensbestand ausmacht und Träger seiner gesamten messianischen Berufsbetätigung ist.

Die volle Wesensgemeinschaft mit Gott wird genauer ausgeführt und begründet durch die Feststellung der **Präexistenz** einer dem Vater gleichen Gottheit in Jesus. Christus ist von Ewigkeit her der wesensgleiche Offenbarer Gottes und der Vermittler aller göttlichen Wirksamkeit oder der **Logos**. Als solcher ist er auch an der Entstehung der Welt und an der bisherigen göttlichen Leitung der Geschichte in Heidentum und Judentum beteiligt (Joh. 1; Kol. 1, 16; 1. Kor. 10, 5; 1. Petri 1, 11). Er ist der volle Wiederschein und die ganze Abprägung des göttlichen Wesens und trägt von Ewigkeit her die persönliche Bestimmtheit an sich, Mensch zu werden. Infolgedessen kann der geschichtliche Jesus auch als „der Mensch aus dem Himmel" bezeichnet werden (Hebr. 1, 3; Kol. 1, 19; Phil. 2, 5; 1. Kor. 15, 47). Diese präexistente Seinsweise Christi und das geschichtliche Leben Jesu werden durch die Fleischwerdung des Wortes miteinander verbunden (Joh. 1, 14). Der Logos, dessen Gottheit bestehen bleibt, nimmt die menschlich irdische Daseinsform des Fleisches gleichzeitig an. Bei seiner Menschwerdung vollzog er allerdings eine „Entleerung" (Kenosis) hinsichtlich seiner göttlichen Erscheinungsweise oder der „Gestalt Gottes" (Phil. 2, 7; 2. Kor. 8, 9).

Die Erhöhung Christi nach Abschluß seines irdischen Lebens gibt ihm sowohl die göttlichen Seinsweise zurück, die er als Präexistenter hatte (Joh. 17, 5), läßt aber außerdem auch noch seine Menschheit in die Sphäre Gottes aufgenommen werden (Apg. 2, 30; 1. Petri 1, 21; Phil. 2, 9). Jesus erscheint nunmehr als der **Weltherr**, der Kyrios, als Gott, der den Menschen lebendig und wirksam gegenwärtig ist und zum unmittelbaren Gegenstand ihres

Kultus, ihres Gebetes, ihrer Religion wird. — So bezeugt die Schrift die volle Menschheit wie die volle Gottheit Jesu Christi, die in Bekenntnis und Erfahrung ihr Echo finden und die zu verstehen die Aufgabe der christlichen Theologie wurde.

## II.

## Das kirchliche Bekenntnis.

Das **apostolische Glaubensbekenntnis** beschränkt sich neben der Nennung der einzelnen Heilstatsachen darauf, die Beziehung Christi zu Gott durch „eingeborenen Sohn," zu den Menschen als „unsern Herrn" zu bezeichnen. Das **Nicänum** versteht den ersten Ausdruck dahin „ex patre natum ante omnia saecula, Deum de Deo, lumen de lumine, Deum verum de Deo vero, genitum non factum, consubstantialem patri. Es fügt eine Beziehung Christi zur Welt hinzu und vermittelt die Verbindung von Gottheit und Menschheit durch die Menschwerdung. Das **Athanasianum** bekennt in den Formen der zeitgenössischen Theologie die Einheit in dem Unterschied der Gottheit Christi in Bezug auf die beiden andern trinitarischen Personen, sodann die volle Menschheit, wie die volle Gottheit, die aber eine Unterordnung des Menschgewordenen unter den Vater nicht ausschließt. Die Gottmenschheit kommt durch die „assumptio humanitatis in deitatem" zustande und „sicut anima rationalis et caro unus est homo: ita Deus et homo unus est Christus."

Das **reformatorische Bekenntnis** drückt die gleichen Tatbestände genau in den gleichen Formen der altkirchlichen Zweinaturenlehre aus (Augustana II). In den Katechismen legt Luther den Nachdruck auf die Stellung Christi als des Herrn und Königs gegenüber seinen Gläubigen. Formula Concordiae VIII führt im Abschluß an Luther und im Gegensatz zu den Reformierten die Zweinaturenlehre durch die Behauptung einer „communicatio idiomatum" weiter. Sie tut das aber wesentlich nur in der einseitigen Form, daß sie die göttliche Natur ihre Eigenschaften, sonderlich die Allgegenwart, der menschlichen Natur mitteilen läßt, die sich aber jener im Stand der Erniedrigung gewöhnlich entäußerte. Das Interesse ist nicht mehr auf die geschichtliche Menschheit Jesu, sondern allein auf die vergottete Menschheit des Erhöhten gerichtet, sodaß das spätere Bekenntnis in dieser Richtung nicht mehr die heilige Schrift voll ausschöpft.

## III.

## Die religiöse Erfahrung Christi.

Die von Schrift und Bekenntnis bezeugte gottmenschliche Christusgestalt ruft ein entsprechendes religiöses Erleben hervor. Das neue christliche Leben, das in einem früheren Artikel als Grundinhalt des persönlichen Christentums und darum auch als letzter Grund der christlichen Gewißheit geschildert wurde, ist nur durch

die Verkündigung von Christus zustande gekommen, die eine ihm genau entsprechende religiöse Erfahrung wirkte. Mit Recht sagt selbst ein moderner religionsgeschichtlich orientierter Theologe, **Wernle**: „Von dieser ersten das Christentum erzeugenden Religion sind alle folgenden christlichen Religionsweisen dadurch scharf unterschieden, daß sie sich an Jesus erst entzündet haben." Mag einem Menschen durch der Mutter Wort oder das lebendige Zeugnis der Kirche die erste Kunde von Christus zuteil geworden sein, mag ihm ein gedrucktes Buch Christus verkündet haben oder er gleich zur ursprünglichsten Quelle, dem Neuen Testament, herabgestiegen sein — immer ist Christus da im Spiel gewesen, wo persönliches Christentum entstanden ist. Genauere Analyse ergibt, daß in diesem Bild Christi immer **menschlich-geschichtliche Züge** sichtbar geworden sind. Der eine vernahm eine Seligpreisung aus der Bergpredigt, der andre ein Gleichnis des Herrn, das ihn anzog; der dritte sah den Gekreuzigten, ein vierter den guten Hirten. Aus diesen einzelnen Bestandteilen erwächst für den Gläubigen eine immer stärker zusammenhängende Anschauung von dem geschichtlichen Leben Jesu. Kann er es doch nicht lassen in der Schrift zu forschen, um alles zu erfahren von dem Mann, der ihn so gewaltig innerlich berührt hat. Wie man nicht eher anhält, als bis man von einem geliebten Menschen alles erfahren hat bis zum Tag der Begegnung mit ihm, so treibt den Christen auch das religiöse Erlebnis zu vollständiger Bemächtigung des geschichtlichen Bildes Jesu. Aber diese Erfassung der menschlichen Gestalt Jesu durch den Gläubigen unterscheidet sich auf das Bestimmteste von der uninteressierten Nachforschung eines Historikers nach einer rein vergangenen Gestalt der Geschichte. Denn dem Christen wird jeder einzelne menschlich-historische Zug und erst recht der ganze geschichtliche Christus zum **Träger gegenwärtigen, ja ewigen Lebens.** Er vernimmt aus dem Gleichnis vom guten Hirten zugleich eine Stimme, die ihn persönlich ruft, aus dem Wort an den Gichtbrüchigen hört er heraus, daß auch ihm durch diesen Jesus jetzt seine Sünden vergeben werden. Der Gekreuzigte stirbt gerade für ihn. So wird das Bild des geschichtlichen Erlösers für den Christen zu einem Transparent des Göttlichen, durch das übergeschichtliches, ewiges Licht hindurchflutet. Darum beugt ihn dieser Christus in den Staub und hebt ihn zugleich an den Thron des Vaters empor. Dieser Jesus verlangt Glauben und schenkt Glauben im religiösen Vollsinn; er wird zur Autorität, der man sich beugen muß, zum Befehlsgeber für unsern Willen, zum Richter über unsre Taten. Das Menschliche und das Göttliche in Christus erscheinen in der religiösen Erfahrung so eng miteinander verbunden, wie das auf einen Goldgrund gemalte Bild byzantinischer Kirchen mit ihrem Untergrund. Nur in der Theorie, nicht aber in der Praxis kann man einzelne Züge in dem objektiven Christusbild

mit nur ihnen entsprechenden religiösen Erfahrungen zusammenordnen. Man könnte etwa sagen: Den menschlichen Zügen in Christus entspricht im religiösen Erleben das brüderliche Vertrauen des Christen, seine furchtlose Hingabe und die sittliche Nachfolge Jesu. Der Gottheit Christi korrespondiert der volle Gehorsam, die unbedingte Unterwerfung, die der Christ dem Herrn gegenüber betätigt, und die sittliche Umschaffung, die er durch ihn erfährt. Jesu vollkommene Gotteserkenntnis spiegelt sich wieder in der vollkommen klaren Gotteserkenntnis des Christen über den Heilsgott, Jesu Gottes Gemeinschaft in dem Zugang zu Gott, den er den Christen eröffnet. Christi Sündlosigkeit erregt den Kampf wider die Sünde, vermittelt aber auch deren Ueberwindung; seine positive Heiligkeit schafft Norm und Kraft für die sittliche Erneuerung des Christen. — So wird die Gottmenschheit Christi und werden die entscheidenden Wesenszüge des Herrn von dem Christen religiös erfahren und ihm dadurch gewiß.

## IV.

### Haupttypen der neueren Christologie.

Die Grundquellen der christlichen Wahrheit, Schrift, Bekenntnis, Erfahrung stellen den Tatbestand fest, daß Christus Mensch und Gott war; aber sie sagen nichts näheres darüber aus, wie sich beides miteinander vereinigt. Das ist das Problem der dogmatischen Christologie, die es im Zusammenhang mit der Trinitätslehre einer Lösung entgegenführen soll. Bevor aber eine solche versucht wird, empfiehlt sich ein kurzer Ueberblick über die Haupttypen der neueren Christologie. Dieser aber soll nicht im historischen Längsschnitt, sondern im systematischen Querschnitt erfolgen und zwar in der Reihenfolge, daß wir die uns fern stehendsten zuerst darstellen und uns immer mehr denjenigen nähern, an die wir selbst anknüpfen.

In der alten Kirche standen sich zwei Richtungen besonders scharf gegenüber, der **Doketismus**, für den die wahre Menschheit Christi nur ein Schein war und der Ebionitismus, für den Jesus bloß ein armer nackter Mensch war. Beide Richtungen sind in der modernen Zeit, wenn auch in andrer Gewandung wieder aufgetaucht. Der erstere Typus findet sich bei den garnicht so seltenen Männern des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts — von den letzteren sei wenigstens A. Drews genannt —, die behaupten, ein Mensch Jesus habe garnicht gelebt und seine Existenz auch als gleichgültig für den Glauben erklären. Auch der neuere philosophische Idealismus von Kant, Fichte, E. v. Hartmann verhält sich außerordentlich gleichgültig gegenüber der wahren, individuellen Menschheit Jesu. An ihre Stelle setzen sie eine ungeschichtliche, **zeitlose Christusidee** oder einen idealen Christus, der aber historisch nie existiert hat. Auch Theologen der religionsgeschichtlichen Schule, wie Bousset in seinen

späteren Aeußerungen — sind diesem Ersatz für Jesus Person durch die Christusidee sehr nahe gekommen. Hegel und die von ihm beeinflußten Theolgen haben sich wenigstens bemüht zwischen dem historischen Jesus und der Christusidee einen etwas engeren Zusammenhang zu stiften. So soll Jesus der erste Träger und Erfinder der Christusidee gewesen sein und in seinem Leben ein Vorbild ihrer Verwirklichung dargeboten haben. Andre wie Troeltsch wiesen auf die soziologische Notwendigkeit hin, mit der sich jeder Kultus um eine Persönlichkeit gruppiert. Allein alle diese Erwägungen reichen nicht aus, um die religiöse Bedeutung der wahren geschichtlichen Menschheit Jesu sicher zu stellen, **sie verflüchtigen diese mehr oder minder wie der alte Doketismus.**

Der **alte Ebionitismus** lebt wieder auf in all den verschiedenen modernen Formulierungen, nach denen **Jesus im Grund doch nur ein Mensch gewesen ist,** mag man ihm auch mehr oder minder auszeichnende Prädikate geben. Man hat hier gern an die von dem Engländer Carlyle vertretene Geschichtsphilosophie angeknüpft, nach welcher große Menschen, Helden oder Heroen die treibenden Kräfte der Geschichte sind. Danach erscheint Jesus als der größte Heros der Religionsgeschichte. Er hat die tiefsten Gedanken über Gott und Sittlichkeit ausgesprochen, in sich verwirklicht, und überträgt sie durch psychisch-historische Fernwirkung auch auf andre Menschen. Dennoch bleibt Jesus dabei durchaus ein Angehöriger der Menschheit. Diese Christusvorstellung liegt Harnacks Wesen des Christentums sowie zahlreichen Jesusbildern zugrunde, die um die Wende des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts erschienen. Dogmatisch scharf hat sie die Glaubenslehre des Jenenser Theologen Wendt formuliert: „Jesus war geschichtlich der erste, der das Vaterwesen und den auf die Gotteskindschaft der Menschen abzielenden Heilswillen Gottes vollkommen erkannt und den andern Menschen offenbar gemacht hat. Er hat als Erster die Menschen zum bewußten Trachten nach der rechten Gotteskindschaft aufgefordert und angetrieben. Aber er war noch mehr als Prophet und Mittler der Gotteskindschaft für andre. Er war selbst eine so vollendete Darstellung der Gotteskindschaft, ein so reines und tadelloses Organ des Gottesgeistes, ein so voll in Gottes Liebeswillen aufgegangener Liebescharakter wie kein Mensch sonst." Trotz all dieser hohen Prädikate gibt Wendt doch klar und offen zu, daß er damit nur den Menschen Jesus mit einer göttlichen Kraft ausgestattet habe, ihn aber nicht auf die Seite Gottes stelle. — Alle diese Theorien sind unzulänglich und für uns überhaupt undiskutierbar, weil sie einen oder den andern der aller Christologie zugrunde liegenden Tatbestände, die wahre Gottheit oder die wahre Menschheit Jesu zerstören.

**Ritschl** sah die Bedeutung Christi darin, daß er der vollendete

Offenbarer Gottes und zugleich das offenbare Urbild der geistigen Beherrschung der Welt war. Nach ihm erfahren Religion und Sittlichkeit ihre absolute Vollendung in Christus und werden durch diesen allein auf alle gläubigen Menschen übertragen. Ritschl meinte mit diesem Aussagen die Gottheit Christi bekannt zu haben; aber die merkwürdigen und zweideutigen Einschränkungen, daß Christus das „Prädikat der Gottheit" nur in der christlichen Gemeinde zukomme, wie die Ablehnung aller positiven Aussagen über seine Präexistenz lassen es doch sehr zweifelhaft erscheinen, ob Christus für Ritschel im streng biblischen, kirchlichen und religiösen Sinn Gott ist. Infolgedessen wird man auch in seiner und auch in seiner Schüler Christologie noch nicht eine befriedigende Lösung des christologischen Problems sehen können.

Eine solche bahnt sich eher schon bei **Schleiermacher** an, so gewiß auch dieser vermöge seiner ungenügenden Trinitätslehre und seiner zu geringen Trennung von Göttlichem und Menschlichem, von Schöpfung und Erlösung hinter der vollen Erfassung der Person Christi zurückgeblieben ist. Nach Schleiermacher besitzt Christus eine stetige Kräftigkeit des Gottesbewußtseins, wesentliche, nicht bloß zufällige Unsündlichkeit und absolute Vollkommenheit. Infolgedessen bezeichnet er als die innerste Grundkraft des Wesens Christi ein eigentliches Sein Gottes in ihm. Dieses denkt aber Schleiermacher unpersönlich, nicht als Menschwerdung des persönlich-präexistenten Logos, sodaß es bei ihm nicht zu einer wirklichen gottmenschlichen Persönlichkeit kommt.

Innerhalb der **neueren lutherischen Theologie** hat sich im Anschluß an den Philosophen Schelling die sogenannte **kenotische Christologie** ausgebildet, die ihren Namen aus dem bekannten 2. Kapitel des Philipper Briefes genommen hat. Nach dieser Ansicht hat die ewige Gottheit des Logos im Moment ihrer Menschwerdung eine Entäußerung und Erniedrigung mit sich vorgenommen. Art und Umfang dieser Erniedrigung wird von den einzelnen Vertretern der kenotischen Christologie verschieden bestimmt. Ihr Urheber, der Erlanger Thomasius, meinte Christus habe auf diejenigen Eigenschaften der Gottheit verzichtet, welche in ihrem Verhältnis zur Welt wirksam werden, wie die Allmacht, Allwissenheit, Allgegenwart. Dagegen habe der Logos auch nach seiner Menschwerdung die der Gottheit innerlich eignenden sittlichen Eigenschaften, wie die Heiligkeit und die Liebe behalten. Der Erlanger Theologe Franck bezog die Kenose des Logos auf die Aenderung seiner gesamten Lebensform, die aus einer göttlichen zu einer menschlichen wurde. In diesen Gedankengängen scheint uns ein wichtiger Weg zur Lösung des christologischen Problemes angedeutet zu sein, so gewiß er sich auch bedeutsame Modifikationen durch engeren Anschluß an das geschichtliche Lebensbild Jesus gefallen lassen muß. Die zweite

bedeutsame Anregung zu einer Lösung des christologischen Problems hat der langjährige Berliner Dogmatiker **J. A. Dorner** gegeben. Er geht von der Meinung aus, es habe eine Entwicklung der Gottmenschheit Christi stattgefunden in dem Sinn, daß entsprechend dem persönlichen und beruflichen Wachstum der Menschheit Jesu sich ihr die Gottheit des Logos immer vollständiger mitgeteilt habe. Darum sei Christus zwar schon von Anfang an Gottmensch gewesen, aber in der Form des Kindes, seine Gottmenschheit habe sich jedoch weiter entwickelt, bis zum vollendeten Mannestum und bis zur Erhöhung. Eine Verbindung und Fortführung der kenotischen und der Dornerschen Christologie findet sich unter neueren Theologen besonders bei Kähler und Schlatter. In dieser Linie bewegt sich auch unsre christologische Theorie, die wir mit aller Bestimmtheit nur als **einen Lösungsversuch** charakterisieren.

## V.

### Ein dogmatischer Versuch zur Lösung der christologischen Problems.

Die Voraussetzung einer Vereinigung präexistenter Gottheit mit der menschlichen Person Jesu ist einmal in der von uns in einem früheren Artikel dargelegten **Trinitätslehre** gegeben. In ihm ergab sich, daß Gottes absolute Persönlichkeit und heilige Liebe nur in dreifacher Personalität besteht. Gott gab kraft seiner Absolutheit von Ewigkeit her seinem Selbst einen dreifachen Bewußtseins- und Willensinhalt. Und zwar macht er zum dauernden Inhalt dieser dreifachen Personalität seiner heiligen Liebe: den richtenden Schöpfergott, den geschichtlichen Versöhnergott und den individuellen Erlösergott. Infolgedessen existierte in Gott eine persönliche Erscheinung von Ewigkeit, die zum Inhalt ihres persönlichen Wissens und Wollens die geschichtliche Versöhnung der Menschheit gemacht hatte. **Gott war mithin als Versöhnergott von Ewigkeit persönlich präexistent.** Zu seiner Bezeichnung können wir als Abkürzung den biblischen Ausdruck des **Logos** verwenden, da gerade er die persönliche Selbständigkeit wie den Willen zur versöhnenden Offenbarung Gottes zum Inhalt hat. Ist damit die notwendige Voraussetzung auf Seiten Gottes gegeben, so muß auf der **menschlichen Seite** die Verbindungsmöglichkeit mit einer solchen Gottesperson gegeben sein. Wer auf dem prinzipiellen Standpunkt steht: „finitum non est capax infiniti," der macht von vorn herein eine wirkliche Menschwerdung Gottes unmöglich. Diese rationalistisch-deistische These ist aber mit dem Standpunkt des Christentums überhaupt unverträglich, denn dieses begründet schon in dem früher behandelten Schöpfungs- und Erlösungsglauben die gegenteilige Ueberzeugung: das Endliche ist fähig, das Unendliche aufzunehmen. Die Welt ist ja als Schöpfung nur ein Anderssein Gottes und wird von ihm dauernd durchwaltet. Schon vor der Menschwerdung stand gerade der Logos zur Welt

und ihrer Geschichte in engster Beziehung, wie das Johannes und die alten Kirchenväter betonen. Innerhalb der Welt ist der Mensch als das kreatürliche Abbild Gottes in besonderm Maße aufnahmefähig für die Gottheit. Und zwar ist es das Individuum um seines persönlichen Charakters willen in noch höherem Maße fähig als die gesamte Menschheitsgattung. Um allerdings in dem Maße Gott aufzunehmen, wie das bei Christus der Fall gewesen ist, muß seine individuelle Persönlichkeit in ganz besonderm Maße dazu vorbereitet gewesen sein. Setzt sich die Besonderheit eines Menschen zusammen aus der eigenartigen geschichtlichen Atmosphäre, aus der er stammt, und aus seiner individuellen Naturanlage, so läßt sich beides gerade bei Jesus feststellen. Er wurde geboren in der „Fülle der Zeit," das heißt in einer Periode, die durch gottesgeschichtliche Führung besonders aufnahmefähig für die vollendete Erschließung der göttlichen Offenbarung war. Nicht minder aber wurde Jesu Natur so von Gott gestaltet, daß sie ein geeignetes Organ für die Aufnahme der Gottheit sein konnte. Sein Leib und seine Seele waren so kraftvoll und gesund, daß sie die Kraft und die Energie der Gottheit zu ertragen vermochten. Vor allen Dingen aber waren seine religiös sittlichen Anlagen für eine besondre Verbindung mit der Gottheit vorbereitet. Jesu Menschheit kannte keine größere Sehnsucht und Freude, als dem Göttlichen nahe zu kommen. Er hatte einen natürlichen Abscheu vor aller Sünde und besaß darum eine Richtung auf Heiligkeit. **So bestanden auch auf Seiten der Menschheit und zwar des einzelnen individuellen Menschen Jesus alle Voraussetzungen zu einer Verbindung mit dem ewigen Versöhner Gott.**

Die tatsächliche Vereinigung der bisher als möglich erkannten Verbindung von Gott und Mensch ging von dem Logos aus. Dieser wählte sich den Menschen Jesus als das entsprechende Organ für seine Erlösung aus und gab ihm die eben beschriebenen besonderen Eigenschaften. Dann vereinigte er sich mit ihm. Diese **Vereinigung wurde eine dauernde,** nicht eine zeitweilige, momentane — wie es die Gnostiker dachten —, sondern die Verbindung erfolgte von dem ersten bis zum letzten Moment seines Erdenlebens, ja über dieses hinaus bis in die Ewigkeit. Diese Verbindung wurde eine **ganz innerliche.** Der Logos erfüllte von innen heraus den Menschenwillen mit seiner Erlöserliebe; er gab dem Menschenwissen den Gehalt seines göttlichen Wissens und schenkte ihm die ganze Heilserkenntnis. Was der Logos will, will darum auch der Mensch Jesu, was jener weiß, kennt auch dieser. Diese innerliche Erfüllung des Menschen durch den Logos ist nicht eine aufgenötigte, sondern eine frei und willig empfangene ja gesuchte. Zwar gibt der Logos, aber der Mensch nimmt stets auf. So wie sich eine Blume den Strahlen der Sonne freudig und immer stärker eröffnet, so wendet sich der Mensch Jesus allen Kräften und Gedanken zu, die ihm von

Gottes Seite zuströmen. **Der Mensch Jesus wird das bewußte, entgegenkommende und vollkommen zureichende Organ für die Durchführung der vom Logos von Ewigkeit her gewollten Versöhnung.** Durch diese dauernde und innere Vereinigung des Logos und des Menschen ist es von Anbeginn zu einem **völlig einheitlichen gottmenschlichen Personenleben** gekommen, sodaß die altkirchliche Formel von der einen Person und den zwei Naturen durchaus zutrifft. Der Logos tut nichts ohne den Menschen Jesus oder über ihn hinaus, sondern alles nur durch diesen Menschen; er wirkt nie unvermittelt, sondern nur vermittelt. Er spricht Gottes Wort ausschließlich in den aramäischen Lauten Jesu, er segnet die Kinder nur durch die milde Menschenhand des Heilandes. Umgekehrt formt der Mensch Jesus keinen Gedanken, den er nicht zuvor orientierte an dem klaren Wissen des Logos. Jedes irdische Ziel, das sich ihm darbietet, mißt er zunächst an dem Willen des Logos und verwirft es sofort, wenn es diesem nicht entspricht, wie es in der Versuchung der Fall war. **So wird alles Menschliche hier göttlich und alles Göttliche menschlich.**

Um eine solche gottmenschliche Einheit herzustellen, mußte allerdings der Logos bei seiner Menschwerdung gewisse Veränderungen, **Entäußerungen,** Entleerungen vornehmen, um durch die volle Erscheinung seiner Gottheit das menschliche Organ nicht zu zersprengen. Der Logos behielt von seinem göttlichen Wesen, von seinem Wollen und Wissen so viel, wie der Mensch Jesus zu ertragen und zu vermitteln vermochte. Das Maß dieser Entäußerungen ist aber nicht in allgemein spekulativen Formeln festzulegen, wie das die in Absatz IV geschilderte kenotische Theorie versuchte, sondern ist konkret nach dem geschichtliche Erlösungsleben Jesu zu bestimmen. (Vergleiche Abschnitt VI.) Denn dieses verlangte wachsende Beschränkungen und wechselnde Betätigungen der Gottheit, entsprechend den verschiedenen Situationen und Aufgaben des Erlöserberufes. Infolgedessen ist hier der von Dorner (vergleiche Abschnitt IV) stammende Gedanke aufzunehmen, daß entsprechend der menschlichen Entwicklung Jesu auch die Mitteilung der Gottheit an sie verlief. Jesus ist zwar auf jeder Stufe seines Lebens Gottmensch, da seine menschliche Persönlichkeit nie ohne Einwohnung der Gottheit bestand. Er war Gottmensch als Kind, aber so wie es ein Kind sein kann; als er an Alter und Weisheit zunahm, nahm auch die Gnade der ihm einwohnenden Gottheit zu. Als Mann empfing er die vollendende Kraft der Gottheit. **Je nach den Ansprüchen und Situationen seines Erlösersberufes erschien in ihm die Gottheit;** sie verzichtete für gewöhnlich auf äußere Geltendmachung, brach aber in der Stunde der Verklärung sichtbar durch. So war Jesus Gottmensch.

## VI.

## Die Bewährung und Durchführung und Christologie am geschichtlichen Bild Jesu.

Jeder dogmatische Versuch einer Christologie hat nur in dem Maße Berechtigung, wie er das wirkliche Erdenleben Jesu deutet und sich an ihm bewährt. Darum muß jedem christologischen Versuch eine Durchführung am geschichtlichen Bild Jesu folgen. Seine ausführliche Darlegung würde jedoch einen so umfassenden Raum beanspruchen, daß wir uns hier mit kurzen Thesen, die aber nach den vorangehenden Darlegungen verständlich sein dürften, begnügen müssen.

1. Die besondre Zubereitung der sündlosen Menschheit Jesu hat sich nach der glaubwürdigen geschichtlichen Ueberlieferung **durch den Heiligen Geist in der Jungfrau Maria** vollzogen — ein ihrem eigenartigen Wesen durchaus entsprechender eigenartiger Anfang.

2. Wie sich das Weltwissen des Gottmenschen allmählich steigerte, so entfaltete sich auch das Bewußtsein um sein einzigartiges Verhältnis zu Gott und seine sittlich religiöse Charakterbildung. Für diese bringt die **Taufe** den prinzipiellen Abschluß, in der Jesus sein von innen gewonnener Bewußtseinsinhalt, der Sohn Gottes zu sein, von außen bestätigt wird; hinsichtlich seines Werkes führt die Taufe Jesu die in der Versuchung sodann bewährte — Bereitwilligkeit zu dessen Uebernahme herbei und bringt ihm die dazu notwendige spezielle charismatische Berufsausrüstung mit dem Geist.

3. **Aus den Versuchungen** Jesu ergibt sich, daß seine Gottheit nicht ein Eindringen, das heißt ein Verstehen und Empfinden von außen kommender Sündenreize im persönlichen Innenleben ausschloß, wohl aber stets die bewußt und willentlich angeeignete Kraft zu ihrer Ausscheidung darbot. Jesu **Sündlosigkeit** und Vollkommenheit besteht darin, daß sich ihr natürlicher Potenzzustand unter Ueberwindung der Versuchung zur vollen sittlichen Aktivität entfaltete. Die **Irrtumslosigkeit** Jesu ist eine Spezialform seiner Sündlosigkeit und schließt jeden Irrtum aus, der aus eigener Sünde stammte oder ihn und andre zur Sünde führte.

4. Für die Erfordernisse seiner Heilswirksamkeit stand Jesus die Fähigkeit zu, alles Notwendige zu wissen und zu können. Das kommt sowohl in seiner unbegrenzten und vollkommenen **Erkenntnis** des Heils Gottes und der sündigen Menschen zum Ausdruck, wie in seiner **Gewalt** über deren innerstes geistliches (Sündenvergebung) wie leibliches Leben und darüber hinausgehend über Natur- und Geisteswelt (Krankenheilungen, Totenerweckungen, Naturwunder, Dämonenaustreibungen).

5. Das **Beten Jesu**, soweit es nicht einfaches Gespräch mit Gott, sondern Dank und Bitte war, versteht sich daraus, daß Jesus,

wie überhaupt zu seinem Beruf, so zu jeder einzelnen Berufstat der charismatischen Führung bedurfte. Diese leitete den stetig vorhandenen Besitz an göttlichem Wissen und Wollen zu der jeweils erforderlichen konkreten Betätigung, — dementsprechend wie auch menschliches Gebet öfter nur schon vorhandene latente Kraft in einer besonderen Richtung entbindet.

6. Die physischen, wie sonderlich die durch die Sünde der Menschheit hervorgerufen psychischen **Leiden** sind vermittelst der Menschheit auch von der Gottheit Jesu real mitempfunden und haben in ihrer Spitze bis zum Tod geführt. Bedeutet aber der **Tod** nur die Aufhebung der Rezeptivität und Aktivität Jesu für diese Welt durch Zerbrechung des dazu notwendigen leiblichen Organes, so kann im Tod der Logos weiter mit der menschlichen Seele Jesu verbunden gedacht werden. Diese Verbindung gibt ein gewisses Verständnis dafür, daß Jesus zum Unterschied zu andern Taten, seine Aktivität sofort in einer neuen Sphäre (Hölle) zu entfalten und dann auf die Wiederbelebung seiner Leiblichkeit zu richten vermochte.

7. In der **Auferstehung**, die den Charakter eines realen Vorganges und nicht einer subjektiven oder „objektiven" Vision trägt, hat Christus seine Weltwirksamkeit durch Erweckung und Umwandlung seiner in den Tod gegebenen Leiblichkeit wieder aufgenommen. Erst dadurch schuf er seiner Gemeinde die Gewißheit, daß er als Erlöser für sie den Heilstod starb und daß er fortan als der ewig lebendige Gottmensch mit dem ganzen Ertrag seines geschichtlichen Wirkens dauernd in der Welt gegenwärtig sein werde, auch wenn er, — wie das die Himmelfahrt vermittelte und veranschaulichte — in eine gottmenschliche Posteristenz überging, die ihn bis zur seiner Wiederkunft als Weltrichter unsichtbar und nur durch Geist und Glauben erfahrbar machte.

8. Nach dem verschiedenen Verhältnis des Logos zur Menschheit kann das ganze Dasein Jesu in einen Stand der **Erniedrigung** und **Erhöhung** zerlegt werden. In dem ersteren — bis zum Tod — nahm der Logos die gekennzeichneten Entäußerungen an seiner Gottheit vor, im zweiten — seit der Auferstehung —, begann der Logos in seine vorweltliche göttliche Daseinsweise zurückzutreten und in diese auch seine erlösende Menschheit aufzunehmen.

# EDITORIALS

## PERSONAL EVANGELISM

On January 24-27 there met in Columbus, O., the largest Pastors' Convention ever held in this country. The registration showed nearly one thousand ministers, largely from the state of Ohio, present. Dr. Cadman, the head of the Federal Council, a man who ought to be sufficiently informed, told us that it was the only one of its kind in size and program.

There were representatives of almost every Protestant denomination, and there was never a note of discord to mar the unity of spirit. Doctrinal questions were wholly absent from the program; "Modernism" or "Fundamentalism" were never even mentioned. The issues raised by these schools of thought were sometimes in the background of the minds of the speakers, as when the chairman, a United Brethren pastor from Akron, said beautifully: "We are not here to argue for a narrow orthodoxy, nor for a broad easy-going liberalism; not to patch up some platform on which we may unite temporarily, but rather to seek *to know* the *mind of Christ* and yield to his spirit and leading in the larger things of the Kingdom. There is a deep and true sense in which the unity of the church has never been broken. We must all concede that there is a precious faith more profound than all our creeds, which overarches all our sects in which we live and move and have our being." "Differences are to be expected, but they are unhappy only when they sharpen tempers and mar fellowship. We may keep our traditions; we may hallow them; but let us keep in our hearts the words of Jesus, "Ye do make the will of God of no effect by your traditions." These words of the chairman marked the spirit of the gathering. On the assumption that we were all one in the faith in the divine Saviour, whatever our individual theological conceptions might be, the Convention set itself to the task of studying the practical problems which face the church of today, such as the religious education of the youth, the reaching of the unchurched, the quickening of the church's own life, international relations, and so forth.

The principal speakers of the Convention were three: Dr. Cadman, Bishop Henderson of Cincinnati and Bishop McConnell of Pittsburgh. Dr. Cadman is in our opinion the leading Protestant clergyman of the country. His dynamic personality, his mar-

velous range of information on all subjects and his unmatched ability as a forum speaker have given him a dominating position. Theologically, he is a Liberal or a Modernist, but his Modernism is not of the aggressive kind of a Fosdick, and by the ordinary minister he is regarded as a very prominent and successful leader of the church, and not as a Modernist at all.

The Methodists contributed by far the greatest number of ministers to the Convention, and so it was only natural that they should furnish two of its outstanding speakers. Bishop McConnell is easily their leading exponent of the social gospel. He is sometimes called a "radical"—which is not surprising at all in the Pittsburgh area, the bulwark of the economic conservatives—he specializes in the social application of the gospel. He sounds the prophetic message, with convincing clearness, but—we think—with little fervor. Bishop Henderson is the very opposite of McConnell and Cadman. He is neither a scholar nor a prophet. He is an old-time Methodist, a believer in revivalism, a devout and spiritual man. He thinks what the church needs most of all is a spiritual awakening, and then, after that has come, going after the outsiders and bringing them to Christ, not only into the church, by the save-one process.

This man, although inferior to Cadman and McConnell intellectually, seemed to move the Convention more than any other. Perhaps it was because he spoke of something every one could understand, or because of the intimate nature of the subject, or of the spiritual tone of the speaker, the audience listened with intense interest. He advised against the employment of outside and professional evangelists. The minister should be his own evangelist, or bring in a neighboring pastor. The evangelistic note should never be absent from his preaching, and there should be seasons of special evangelistic efforts. Before, however, there could be any thought of evangelizing others, the church-members themselves should be awakened to a real concern about their spiritual condition.

Then—and that was his main contribution to the subject—the evangelism to be carried out should be *personal,* i. e., the members themselves should engage in it. He proposed the minister should pick out, train and send out a group of men and women as a soul-winning squad. These select persons should approach members and outsiders and speak to them about their spiritual condition. And this group should be kept in existence and operation all year round, although at certain times more called upon than at others.

The rules of procedure given to them were: "Be courteous; be courageous; be direct; be entirely natural!" And more to the

same effect. The bishop, as said before, was thoroughly in earnest and communicated his own state of mind to his hearers.

We of the Evangelical Synod group—about 27 of us—discussed that speech at the luncheon later. Every one felt that he had been deeply moved. Also that before we would adopt the bishop's method, we should have to adapt it to our own people.

The writer, after thinking it over considerably, is sure that it has done him good to have listened to the bishop's plea. However, as to the actual training of an evangelistic troop in his own church —that he considers one of his pia desideria for the future. At the present time, he will be satisfied if his members will go out systematically and bring others under the sound of the gospel. If they do that much, then he has at least a chance to widen the scope of his influence.

# ARE WE GOING TO MAKE A NEW CATECHISM?

The General Conference at New Bremen (1921) decided that the catechism be so revised that, "instead of being a handbook in the formal (theoretical) instruction in doctrines, it might be helpful in awakening Christian life and fitting the pupils for their duties as members of the church and the social body." The Board of Religious Education was to prepare a draft of the so revised catechism, to be passed upon by the district conferences and, ultimately, the next General Conference. It was especially stipulated that there should be no change of doctrine.

The Board of Religious Education presented their draft to the General Conference of 1925. General Conference adopted it as a basis for a new draft, to be prepared by a special revision committee. This committee was to submit the product of its labors to the general officers and, after gaining their approval, proceed with the publication thereof (General Conference Report (1925), p. 218).

We don't know how far this committee has advanced with its work. We hope the original draft of the Board of Religious Education will be greatly improved upon. We were not impressed with it at all. To mention only one thing, the ten commandments were left in the same place as in the old catechism, although they certainly should have found their position under the first article. How illogical to discuss the Mosaic legislation first, and the creation of the world afterwards!

However, if the committee works ever so successfully, what they give us will in no sense be a new catechism. It will be the old catechism simplified in language, somewhat re-arranged and here and there abridged or added to. It will, perhaps, be a little less theological and more practical.

Some few of our Synodicals, largely of the younger clergy, had been hoping for something else. These brethren are in tune with modern tendencies and had been wishing, if not expecting, that the catechism would be modernized in some of its doctrinal statements as well as in its phraseology. Only lately one representative of that class has told us more in detail where he has had serious difficulty with the book in its present form. His objections are chiefly on such subjects as original sin (loss of the image of God), demonology, and on a certain conception of the atonement. He said that the teachings of modern theologians, even of those belonging to a very "positive" school, seek to remove the stumbling blocks to a more rational understanding of scripture truths, while in the

catechism they are left in the road, in all their roughness and clumsiness. In his opinion the catechism ought to be brought up to date, it ought to reflect the best religious thought of the church. And since this thought is never stationary but always seeks for more adequate expression of new light, the catechism, like textbooks in other fields of knowledge, ought to have successive revisions.

We doubt very much that the brother's wishes will soon be realized. The churches have been very slow in changing their confessional standards. We don't know of any that has felt called upon to lay a revising hand on its creeds. The Presbyterians, quite a while ago, were agitated by a demand to soften the rigorous statements of Calvinism as found in the Westminister Confessions, and substitute for them a more "humane" view of the deity. The demand was rejected. It was said ours is not a creed-making age, and all that was done consisted in the addition of an *explanatory* statement which declared that the sovereignty of God emphasized in the creed was in no way opposed to the revelation of his redeeming love.

At the present time the opposition to ancient creeds and old catechisms is much more pronounced than it was then, and new creeds have been actually worked out and presented (e. g. by Shailer Mathews in his "The Faith of Modernism"). They have, however, not been adopted by any church. And for good reasons. It would be entirely impossible to make a creed on which all could agree; and besides, the mere attempt to change creed and catechism would split the churches wide open. They have troubles and tasks enough as it is; any concession made to the Modernists in the realm of creedal statements or ancient text books of religion, would at once react in the most militant form of Fundamentalism. Therefore, in answering the question raised in the title, we reply, the Synod is not going to *make* a new catechism. We may get a new catechism, but if the committee is going to follow instructions, its pedagogical features will be modernized, not its doctrines.

Still, if that is so—and who would doubt that it is?—how are the brethren who differ with the catechism in various details going to preserve their intellectual integrity and their synodical loyalty? We have seen from the article referred to that some are facing a real difficulty. And we must realize that, and make due allowance for it. The publication of the brother's somewhat temperamental outburst has disquieted some; they are afraid we are drifting away from our moorings. Others, again, the younger ones, openly rejoice and feel that he has spoken the liberating word.

We think there is no reason to be alarmed. The brother in question finds it hard to believe some of the things said about Adam's sin and its consequences. Well, that involves the question of the original state of man. It can be said without fear of contradiction, we think, that no one knows anything definite about that state; all we do know is by speculation and inference. And as to the results of Adam's sin, all that matters is that sin is as universal as the human race and is passed on from fathers to sons; and that not only the Scriptures are, but even Kant, the philosopher, is, right when they both proclaim that sin is a "radical evil," one that inheres in the root and is not only acquired by growth in a bad environment.

Even when our "Eden Graduate" takes up a certain conception of the atonement and, in a rather obscure quotation, seems to find fault with the conventional idea of the imputation of Christ's righteousness to the believer, I confess freely that I have always felt the unsatisfactoriness of this view. No matter how it is put it seems an arbitrary act of God, and an intelligent young Christian will sometimes say that he doesn't see how the fact that Christ was righteous can help him. This shows that the approach must be sought in a different and deeper way. There is no question about Christ being our Saviour. The question is only as to how and why he is our Saviour. The answer to this question has engaged the minds of theologians since Anselm's "Cur deus homo?"; and each generation takes it up again. Seeberg in his "Dogmatik" (discussed by us last year) makes much of the idea of Christ being the *guarantor*, his death and resurrection being the "guarantee" of our own salvation. In other words, that in Christ, the head, redemption was completed in principle and that on this rests the faith of the believer, not on his own, always imperfect, state of the Christian life. There is truth in this, although it may not be the whole truth. At any rate it shows that each age feels obliged to wrestle with the old question anew.

Summing up the line of argument, we say our catechism never intended to say the final word on every detail of the Christian faith. A certain latitude in its use and exposition is the privilege of every minister who is not a mere automaton. But he should not turn his catechism class into a debating society. He should communicate his beliefs, not his doubts; his affirmations will build up his pupils, not his negations.

# The Christian World

## America and Religion

From The Northwestern Christian Advocate, Chicago, January 13, 1927

[*The following composite statement on religion was prepared by one hundred leading American clergymen, representing various denominations, at the request of the Church Advertising Department of the International Advertising Association. These eminent clergymen were requested to state what great religious message they believed should be sent out to the people of America at the beginning of the new year. Their replies were welded into this single statement by the Rev. Charles Stelzle, president of the Church Advertising Department, and submitted to them for their final approval.*]

In the beginning—God. In him we live and move and have our being.

God is a spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

God is a living, personal force, working in us and through us to do his will.

God is love, and loves every human soul.

God is truth, and living close to him makes us know the truth.

We may realize God's presence in the everyday problems of life. To practice the presence of God brings poise and dignity to the soul.

It is God's will that his children shall live complete lives, worthy of the mental, moral and physical equipment he has given them.

Science knowledge does not shorten the arm of God. It lengthens it. It reveals the purpose of God. It indicates the partnership of God and man in fulfilling his plans for the complete redemption of the world.

There is one God, the Lord and father of us all. And we may know him.

No man is complete without God. And in him and through him we are related one to another.

### The Personality and Mission of Jesus

God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

For God sent not his son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved.

The nature of God is supremely revealed in the personality of Jesus, he that has seen Jesus has seen the father.

The revelation of the nature of God, in the personality of Jesus, makes Jesus the immortal leader of the race.

The rulers of the world built their kingdoms upon force—and lost. Jesus alone founded his empire upon love—and won.

The life of Christ concerns him who, being "the mightiest among the holy, the holiest among the mighty, lifted with his pierced hands empires off their hinges, turned the stream of centuries out of its channel and still governs the ages."

His message never grows old. The world has never come up to Christ's teachings. It is just beginning to get a glimpse into the significance of his words. Heaven and earth may pass away, but the words of Jesus are eternal. His mission will be further revealed as men are prepared to grasp its meaning.

Jesus not only taught great truths—he gave men power to live them. Millions have testised to this fact. Jesus has taken the vilest men and women and given them power to live pure, clean, wholesome lives.

The power of Jesus as a social reformer is growing. He is the court of last appeal. He is today the greatest ruler in the civilized world. He is the king of kings.

### Religion in the Life of Humanity

The reality of man's spiritual nature and its relation to God makes him "incurably religious." He may be alien to the church and to its customs, but he usually believes in God and accepts the value of religion as a force in human life.

This is true because he finds himself in a world governed by orderly forces. All about him are signs of unity and purpose, revealing mind and will that are infinite. As man grows in wisdom and stature or suffers sudden distress or danger, he inevitably moves toword the Supreme Being whom he has always found in his inner consciousness.

It is the purpose of religion to make God more fully known to men, in order that the fundamental needs of the race may be satisfied.

Religion is not manufactured by priests and ministers. It already exists even in the hearts of those who never heard of God nor of the church. Priests and ministers merely seek to interpret religion so that it may be more generally understood and practiced.

The reason that Jesus was the most normal man who ever lived was because his life was perfectly in tune with the spirit of God. The most normal man today is the one whose life is most nearly in tune with the life of Jesus Christ.

True religion opens the doors of man's life to all that uplifts and blesses and closes them to what breaks and blights. It is the divine culture of the mind.

Religion breaks down the wall of partition between classes and peoples and fosters good will, because it lifts one hand to God and reaches the other across to man. It makes the spirit of human brotherhood man's dominant social passion.

It gives men a true standard of values. It shows them that "a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." It asks him, "what shall it profit a man if he should gain the whole world and lose him own soul?" It teaches him that "if any man hath not the spirit of Christ, he is none of him."

Religion centers in the cross of Jesus. It frankly appeals to men to answer the call "Come and suffer." It does not always lead to an easy road. To many it is the way to Golgotha.

But it gives strength to bear the cross. It brings comfort in seasons of distress. It supplies all needs, according to the riches of God, in Christ Jesus. And at the end of the road is victory and eternal life.

### The Place of the Church in the World

It was the purpose of Jesus to redeem the world from sin in every form and to bring it into harmony with the will of God.

For this purpose he appointed His disciples. He commissioned them to preach the gospel to every creature.

These early disciples organized groups of Christians into churches which became centers of religious activity. These churches have been greatly multiplied, until today they are found in every part of the world and their members number many millions.

In spite of their short-comings, they have been instrumental in bringing about a civilization which today is the best the world has ever known. And tomorrow it will be better.

Christianity's stalwartness, its ruggedness, its strength to withstand shock and opposition, is one basis of its appeal to all men and women. It is not a tottering structure. It is not a failing institution. Men are not being asked to come and help save the church. The church is asking them to come in so that they may help save the world.

The church is not an end in itself. It is simply a means to an end. Its purpose is manyfold: worship, teaching, fellowship, service.

The church does not profess to be an association of superior people. It is an association of those who, candidly acknowledging their need, desire help, both human and divine, in the conquest of life.

Because life is too big and too hard for any man to live it alone, it is the message of the church that he does not have to meet life alone. It offers a comradeship along the whole way of man's pilgrimage. To those who are baffled and burdened and beaten it holds out the hand of friendship, but mostly it points the way to God, who is the "Giver of all comfort," the source of all strength.

It is world-wide in its activities. It gives a greater opportunity for helpfulness to others than any other institution. It gives inspiration to every other worthwhile organization. It develops the men and women who take the highest lace of leadership in the world's work.

It stands for the redemption of all life and all of life, from waste,

misuse, and sin. It seeks to bring about better understanding between men and nations. It believes in social justice and brotherhood.

The church proclaims the "good news"—the gospel—which is capable of solving every problem facing humanity today, so that soon there may be a new world wherein dwelleth righteousness in all relationships.

To this end, the church appeals to all men everywhere to open their hearts and minds to God, to live as his children, to dwell in harmony with their fellow men, in this and other lands, and under the leadership of Jesus, to help bring in the kingdom of God.

## The Protestant Episcopal Church in Danger

### Part of Address before the Convention of the Diocese of Marquette by its Bishop, The Rt. Rev. Robert L. Harris, D.D.

From The Chronicle (Episcopal), Poughkeepsie, N. Y., January, 1927

*"During the last twenty-five years nothing comparable to this courageous and convincing statement of the dangers confronting the integrity of the Protestant Episcopal Church has been uttered by a member of the House of Bishops."*—THE CHRONICLE.

During the past year the General Convention has met in New Orleans and elected for the first time in American history a Presiding Bishop. This marks a departure in our national Church Government from the old Colonial form to that patterned after the Federal Government of our Nation.

It is a change in the interests of greater efficiency, and is, I believe, thoroughly American.

Forty-five of the signers of the Declaration of Independence were members of our Church. The Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of our Church appear to have been framed by men of similar minds. The similarity is clearly marked. Our change in Church Government merely brings it more closely in line with our Federal form and preserves at every step American ideals.

I do not believe the criticism that it attempts to set up an American Hierarchy can be justified. I am convinced it is completely American and in harmony with the best American traditions. * * *

There is, of course, a minority party which believes in an imperial type of Church Government, with a Primate at the head of the Church and Archbishops at the head of the several Synods. They would gladly organize our Synods with this purpose in view.

This brings up the question of the strongly diverging lines of thought which are developing in our Church at the present time. In the majority are those who believe in "The Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America." They desire it to remain true to its traditions—its constitutional character. They believe it should continue free to become completely American, reflecting the best thought

and deepest spiritual convictions of the American people as this country develops its inherent nationhood and individuality among the peoples of the world.

The forward looking leaders of the Church wish to keep the Church free—modern—virile and independent, and the organization of the Church sufficiently constitutional and flexible to meet new conditions, so that the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America may always be ready and always be free to voice clearly the spiritual aspirations of this nation still in the making.

They believe the Holy Spirit is still alive and is still speaking to men and to nations in a language they can understand. They believe America needs no Latin pageantry to express its spiritual genius.

On the other hand, there is a minority party, thoroughly organized and thoroughly determined, aggressively fighting day and night to thrust the Protestant Episcopal Church back into the Middle Ages. They mock at the term "Protestant." They would discard as worthless all the liberty, freedom, and truth won by the martyrs of the Reformation.

They would attire the clergy in the gorgeous robes of the past. Some would add mediaeval services to our American Prayer Book. They would, in dress and ceremonial, reproduce the Middle Ages and revive the very Roman usages which the enlightened nations of the world discarded during the period of the Reformation.

It is a fantastic dream. But the men who advocate it are zealous and stake everything on its realization. They will not even let the sacredness of their ordination vows stand in their way. They are determined to turn back the hands of time and place our American Church on the road that leads toward Rome.

This party, seemingly, would make of our American Protestant Episcopal Church a pale and anaemic imitation of the Roman Church. I can not see why extremists bewitched by the claims of Rome, do not courageously and manfully march to Rome in a body instead of dropping in one by one. Perhaps they have work to do in our church before they go.

There seems little question but that the constitutional character of our Church and its essentially American traditions are threatened. If we lose our Protestant heritage as well as our Apostolic simplicity we may as well abandon all hope of ever serving as the Church of the Reconciliation in a divided Christendom.

A Church chained to the past, manacled by ghostly fingers, muffled in ancient forms and ceremonials, can not well act as the voice of the Holy Spirit to modern America—a nation determined to make its own career, to realize its own peculiar destiny.

The time has come for us to make our choice. The laity are pretty well of one mind. The great majority believe in the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America, and in our American Book of Common Prayer. But the time has come when they must be willing to make sacrifices to preserve both. Our Diocesan clergy are practically

a unit in their loyalty to both. But we must express the faith that is in us. We must make our contribution to the larger life of the Church when about us others are seeking by organizations and ceaseless propaganda to change the very character of our Church. Otherwise we may awake to find the Church of our fathers gone, our church buildings housing those who loathe the Reformation and revile the very name of the Church which is their spiritual mother, men who have forgotten our fathers and the Constitution they brought forth. We may attend our Church to find the Prayer Book displaced and strange masses uttered by strangely attired clergy.

There are those who still unwittingly seek church unity along byways which ultimately lead within the walls of Rome. There they shall probably find instead of compassion, forced obedience, iron discipline, and for those trained in the freedom of Anglican thought, spiritual and intellectual slavery.

Do we wish to preserve our Church as we have received it from our fathers, apostolic in lineage and simplicity, thoroughly American in spirit, with out intellectual liberty and freedom carefully guarded by Constitutional guarantees?

If we wish to preserve our Church, vital, alert, American in spirit, as we received it from our fathers, we must unite and rally to its defense against the attacks of those who would destroy it by boring from within.

For the sake of America and our Church, and the future spiritual development of our children, we must seek to establish and maintain an open mind in all things religious. We must protect the fundamental integrities of our Church. We must emphasize the simple principles of the teaching of Jesus Christ only as necessary to salvation. No complicated code of priest-craft should hinder the approach to God of devout and earnest souls. We must stand squarely on the essential foundation of: 1—The Bible. 2—The Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed. 3—The two Sacraments ordained by Christ Himself. 4—The Apostolic Ministry.

We must place Christ first, then afterward the Church as the corporate expression of His life.

## The Students' War On Mars

Two thousand students, representing colleges in every State in the Union, are "opposed to the general imperialistic policy of the United States Government," according to a resolution indorsed, but not actually adopted, by the National Christian Student Conference, recently concluded in Milwaukee. The resolution to some of our editors is as a red rag to a bull, and charges that they are pacifist, radical, even moronic, are heaped on the heads of the young idealists. The conference, which is said not to be a permanent organization, was brought together under the auspices of the Y. M. C. A., in response to a movement started in the undergraduate "Y" organizations of the colleges

and universities. Its purpose was to provide a discussion group in which students "could attempt to settle in their own minds the problems of almost any nature if the application of Christ's teachings could help." With such a wide range before them, the students tackled most of the problems which vex the minds of sages and saints and of the workaday people of the world, but it is the students' attitude on war and "militarism" which arouses most emphatic comment. War came in for further action in another discussion, in which twenty-seven men and women delegates, by a rising vote, we read, declared they would not support any war. The greatest sentiment of the convention indorsed the statement, "I am ready to support some wars and not others," the vote showing 740 holding this attitude. Ninety-five said they would support any war declared by recognized authority. Three hundred and fifty-six were not ready to commit themselves.

The resolution against "American militarism" also condemns military training in the colleges. It was offered by William J. Tyler of New York University, after a discussion in which nationalism was called "lies and false ideals," we read in the Milwaukee *Journal*. All who discust the resolution from the floor favored it, we are told, the only issue being whether it or any other resolution should be adopted. It was formally indorsed by a large vote, after a policy of no resolutions had been established. Among those who threw stones at Mars was Kirby Page, editor of *The World To-morrow*, who said, we read in the Milwaukee paper, that the world "stands to-day on the brink of another great conflict and catastrophe," and that "there are more potential causes of war in Europe to-day than there were in 1914." This, said Mr. Page, is "a great challenge to the followers of Christ in these days to rise up and turn the tide against war, to destroy the whole war system." As Mr. Page's address is quoted further in the Milwaukee daily, he goes on:

"Through the ages many profest Christians have failed utterly to understand the meaning of Jesus' teachings. Organized groups of Christians have with appalling frequency slaughtered multitudes of their own coreligionists, to say nothing of the fury with which they have attacked heretics and infidels. After reading the story of the religious wars, the Crusades, the Inquisition, the burning of witches and the repeated massacres of the Jews, one can scarcely fail to reach the conclusion that the vast majority of the profest followers of Jesus have always been blind to the real meaning of His religion.

"It can not be doubted that the method of Jesus in dealing with offenders was to overcome evil with good. Organized groups have rarely used this method of maintaining security and justice. Herein is found the reason why we are still confronted with the peril of war.

"There are enough of you here to turn the tide against war during the next three decades if only you will consecrate yourselves unreservedly to this great cause."

Amidst these alarums against war a genial note was sounded by a Japanese, Susumu Kobe, a student at the University of Washington, who said he once thought America was imperialistic. Now, however,

he realizes that America is "not a country of turmoil, but that under the surface of things there is a love for peace and friendship." He will tell his countrymen, he said, "that America is not as bad as they think she is." He regrets the immigration act of 1924, which he feels is an "insult" to Japan, and said, as we quote from the Milwaukee daily again:

"I do not deny the right of the United States to pass any law it desires, but I do say that immigration can be restricted without singling out Japan as an object of insult. Japan is not preparing for war. It may have done so in the past, but I give you my word of honor that Japan is, perhaps, the most peaceful nation in the world to-day. Her resentment of your immigration act is being done in a peaceful way."

Outside of the conference, the seed scattered by the students fell upon some stony ground. "Moscow!" says Col. Stephen Park, head of the National Reserve Officers' Association. Referring to the leaders of the conference, Colonel Park is quoted in the Milwaukee *Journal* as saying:

"These men have brought these students here—many of them at least—under false pretenses and without giving the delegates a hint that the conference was to degenerate into a meeting for the dissemination of doctrines which smack strongly of disloyalty. In all the discussions which have taken place, as far as I can learn, the United States Government has been attacked viciously, and not one speaker has defended it.

"The speakers who addrest the conference Thursday, and others in this country who are purveying similar anti-militaristic doctrines, are getting their salaries straight from Moscow. They are going about the country attending gatherings of young people, and making those gatherings the occasion for spreading propaganda which comes from Soviet Russia."

Some zestful, emphatic protests against the students' "pacificism" are sounded also here and there in the press. For instance, the Cincinnati *Enquirer* says that "Jesus never failed to recognize the temporal authority of the State," and asserts of the students' actions:

"These incidents go to show to what lengths the insane pacifism and the virulent socialism of influential groups in America have attained. The churches are filled with this evil, disruptive teaching; a teaching which makes of Cromwell, Washington and Lincoln unchristian murderers—counselors of, and participants in, war; teachings which are an insult to every martyr who has laid down his life in the sacred cause of liberty, for love of country, for the defense of women and children and homes from the ravagement of brutal soldiery intent upon loot and human slaughter.

"Well does a brave Army chaplain denounce these libels and aspersions of namby-pamby cowards, who hide behind a perversion of moral patriotism and religious duty, as treason. If not that, it certainly may be said that such utterances hold the active germ of

treason; for, as Chaplain Alva J. Brasted, of the Second Army Division, has said: 'Such action savors of treason. It is a duty of a father to provide for his own household, and one of those necessary provisions is the defense of his own, and it is the duty of the citizen to stand ready to defend his own country.'

"What have these young saints to say of the Covenanters of Scotland, of the iron legions of Cromwell, of the tattered patriots of Valley Forge, of the men who curst and shot with Jackson at New Orleans, of the millions who heard the call of Lincoln, who went forth to strike the shackles from the limbs of an enslaved people; of the splendid American boys who went down to the fields of battle in Europe during the World War? Their puling proclamation should brand them for what they are: Fanatics who would preserve the Eighteenth Amendment, regardless of cost and effort, but traitors to their flag in any hour of their country's need."

"Nobody wants war," observes the Hartford *Courant;* "but war may be thrust upon us or self-respect may force us to start a war." For—

"There are just wars and unjust wars, but it is not for the individual or any group of individuals to declare that they consider themselves immune from the responsibilities of citizenship under the flag that protects them. This applies to the members of the National Conference of Students as well as to all other American citizens. The young gentlemen specifically referred to are not making the proper preparation for their chosen career when they preach disloyalty."

A little more indulgence toward "youth's precipitancy," the Brooklyn *Eagle* says:

"It may be that the highest ethical view of war obligations is that which makes the individual conscience the determining factor. A war is just or unjust. It may be held that the Rev. Mr. X—, believing a specific war to be unjust, ought not to fight in it or to support it. That is debatable. There have always been sincere, conscientious objectors, who found even prison preferable to the sacrifice of their convictions.

"But 'any future war' is an inclusive term that the godly man, if wise, will avoid. Benjamin Franklin to the contrary notwithstanding, there are just wars, good wars, wars that the Christian soldier is bound to fight in. National defense, a high aim of statesmanship, is entitled to ethical sanction. The existence and the dignity of a nation like the United States mean much to the whole world; we are not selfish, but altruistic in maintaining them. That is something for the theological students to consider."—*Literary Digest.*

## The Need for the Scholar

It was with real complacency that America regarded its educational facilities, until the war disclosed the real state of public inteligence. Then it was discovered that more than eleven per cent of the men in the service were illiterate. Educational surveys disclosed the fact that some six or seven nations in the world family were superior to the United States in the matter of mental training, and that the average intelligence of the American people was about that of the eighth grade of the public schools. Such reports indicated that there were nearly five milions of illiterates in the United States, of whom four and a third millions were voters. The state of New York was found to have 425,000 and Indiana 53,000 such illiterates. In one county of a western state twenty per cent of the people could not read or write. And this condition prevailed more frequently among native-born Americans than among immigrants. It would appear that better provisions have been made for arriving foreigners than for native Americans. Such facts are disturbing to the national pride. Democracy demands an intelligent population. Manifestly, education must go much further into the life of the people before it performs its normal function in the republic. A much more extensive and costly program of public instruction must be plotted before competence is reached.

There are three institutions that are responsible for popular education—the state, the church and the school. The home is left out of the list by design, for it has largely abandoned its original function of instruction. Even in the supremely essential items of morals and religion it no longer undertakes to render its expected service. The state is as yet unawakened to this vital interest. Neither the people who fashion the laws, interpret them or enforce them, regard education as more than a minor concern of the state. We have not yet allowed this cause the dignity of a department of education in the government, though we have two departments for the promotion of the arts and interests of war. The church is too much divided to be intrusted with the cause of public instruction. It is not even competent as yet to provide suitable religious education. Where it attempts general educational work, as in the parochial schools, it is often at the expense of sound pedagogical principles, and chiefly in the interest of sectarian teaching.

The school itself, originally inaugurated by the church, and fostered by the state as a necessity of the public welfare, is the institution that takes seriously the work of training the youth of the land into proper use of instructional materials and suitable habits of intellectual activity. The school is properly proceeding upon the principle that every child in the republic has a right to the inheritance of institutional life, political ideals, educational discipline, and ethical and religious standards, which has been secured at great cost through many centuries of civiliation. It is undemocratic and unthinkable that these things should be reserved for a favored section of the popu-

lation, while other children are deprived of them by stunting labor in mines, factories, fields and forests.

And the school has made the equally illuminating discovery that the whole of the child is entitled to the training that was once reserved for his mind alone. Proper food and clothing, the meaning of fresh air, ordered exercise, skill of eye and hand, sportsmanship and fair play, manners, courtesy, moral integrity, and some sense of the meaning and value of holy things are as much a part of a balanced education as the discipline of the mind. The school to render its full service to the youth of the nation must be sensitive of all these interests. And this is a notable and difficult enterprise.

What is education? No question elicits so many and such diverse answers. It is certainly not the mere inpartation of knowledge. That mistaken notion is gone forever among trustworthy educators. To have a wide range of information is by no means the equivalent of possessing a proper education. The most voluminously informed person in a community might be far down in the list of those competently trained. A considerable fund of knowledge is indeed employed in the process of education, and this should be verified and trustworthy fact. But such information is a means rather than an end. Education is the process of drawing out the abilities of the student rather than of putting into his mind the facts of text-books or lectures.

Nor is education the process by which young men and women are prepared for vocational skill. There is a wide-spread obsession prevalent among people who deal with the methods of public instruction that the chief business of education is the attainment of a bread-and-butter equipment for life. It ought to be practical, they say, and lead to definite and usable results. In its common interpretation, there is no more deadly education heresy than this. Vocational training has a rightful and necessary place. One who is to be a banker, a farmer, a teacher or a housewife needs some technical and adequate discipline for that purpose. But back of the farmer, the mechanic or the physician is the individual, the citizen, the home-maker, and education is first of all and up to the point of specialization a preparation for this fuller career.

This is the basis for the claim that the scholar is the prime necessity of American life. By the scholar is meant not the technical expert, nor the pedantic devotee of dead languages and lost arts, but the man or woman who by competent educational training has become informed, open-minded, disciplined, and prepared to deal in adequate manner with the questions of personal conduct, social relations and citizenship as they emerge. Viewed in that dimension, education is, as Mrs. Wells affirms, the only thing that can save cizilization from chaos.

The field of education is very broad. But there are certain disciplines that are essential. The first is history, the greatest of the teachers of mankind. Some knowledge of the past's incalculable hoard of wisdom and experience is requisite to discover the line that human progress takes, and to avoid the mistakes of earlier genera-

tions. The second is science, both because its products are immediately essential to human welfare and because its processes are the best means of attaining accuracy of investigation and the willingness to look all facts in the face. The third is the study of the social order, whose groupings, from the family to the broadest areas of international life, form the most fascinating and rewarding of investigations. And the fourth, and in large degree the most important of all, is the rich field of morals and religion, without whose inclusion no educational program is sufficient. In this manner the past and the present alike contributed to the forming of ability, poise and character. The objectives of education are, as Milton believed, manners, virtue, freedom, power. These qualities are above the line of political, sectarian and class differences. They are the foundations of expert scholarship and of vocational capability. They are the indispensable elements in a people whose ideals are efficiency and democracy.—*Christian Century.*

# Book Review

(When ordering books, please mention this Magazine.)
NOTE—Reviews, when not signed, are by the Editor.

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**Adventurous Religion** and other Essays by Harry Emerson Fosdick. Harper and Brothers Publishers, New York, 1926. 326 pages.

Fosdick, as every one knows, is a Modernist and a leader of Modernists. He feels that it is one of the great tasks before the Christian church to-day to bring its faith into harmony with modern conceptions. He is not interested in rituals, in doctrines, in the church as an institution, primarily, but in Christian life. To him Christ came to make the Kingdom of God possible on earth by the creation of personal and social righteousness. Christ's simple message and purpose have been obscured, according to the writer, by elaborate theological systems that have grown up around him. To become a follower of Christ has come to mean largely to give intellectual assent to a set of doctrines that have little or nothing to do with vital religion. As he expresses it, the religion about Jesus has to a great extent displaced the religion of Jesus, and the real friends of the church have no more important duty to perform than to teach and communicate the religion Jesus himself had, that is, his unshakable trust in God and his unending, victorious love of man.

To infer from this that Fosdick sees in Christ only an inspiring example and that his whole theology is based on the moral influence theory, would not do him justice. He believes in prayer and its regenerating power. True prayer puts us into a receptive relation with the Spiritual Universe and by it we assimilate power from there, which we could not create ourselves.

The creeds of the church were originally legitimate attempts to give a reasoned expression of her faith, but to try to cast the minds of modern men in these molds would not do at all. They owe their existence to views held in a pre-scientific age. The discoveries of astronomy have changed our world view. Evolution has altered our anthropology; and the methods of critical science applied to the study of scripture allow us no longer to believe in the "inerrancy" of the bible, or that it is God's word from cover to cover. Not as though we were condemned to agnosticism, or compelled to doubt the teachings of Christ, or lose faith in the bible as a heavenly light "shining in a dark place." We firmly hold all that is essential in the old faith, but we are willing to shed the thought forms of the race in its infancy and adapt our beliefs to maturer knowledge of the modern age. This kind of Christianity is far from being destructive; it is adventurous,

i. e., active, personal, daring, mountain-moving, heroic, and great in experience and discovery.

Fosdick in this book gives considerable space to the need of churches' and Christians' adjusting themselves to science. He knows very well that science cannot solve all mysteries. On the contrary, he says, science has wrought many achievements, but it has not cleared up a single elemental mystery. Still, there are many things about which there is general agreement, and a Christian should be open to all new light even if a narrow conception of bible inspiration seemed to be opposed to it.

The author pleads for his thesis—that true science and true faith are not antagonistic—with great skill and persuasive power. We are perfectly willing to grant it. Also that Christlikeness is more necessary than, and immeasurably superior to, creedal uniformity. Before we can have the mind of Christ, however, we must accept him, see and find in him, our Saviour. This side of the Lord, the "Christ for us," Fosdick seems to forget, in this book and in others. Luther, Wesley, Augustine, Paul—the leaders of the race and the spiritual ancestors of Protestantism, passed by the gate of faith into the land of promise, unto the throne of grace. We know no other way. Christlikeness is a thing of growth and will always be imperfect. The soul will never be able to rest its hope in sufficient evidence of Christlikeness. Christ "made unto us redemption and sanctification" is the only foundation for soul certitude the New Testament knows.

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**The Unknown Bible.** A study of the Problem of Attitude toward the Bible by *Conrad Henry Moehlman*, Professor of Church History in Rochester Theological Seminary. George H. Doran Co., New York. 1926. 271 pages.

The attitude toward the Bible which this book seeks to correct, is that of the fundamentalist who sees in the Bible the ipsissima verba of God from start to finish; to whom every book is on the same level of divine inspiration and who feels therefore compelled to resist every attempt to try a more rational approach to the book. Such an attitude puts a man in opposition to every advance of science that seems to contradict old conceptions. It makes an understanding of the gradual development of religious ideas impossible. It really shuts out those who hold it from a sane understanding of the nature of the bible and makes the bible to that extent an unknown book to them.

The author sketches for us the whole historical development which has given us the Old and New Testaments; taking up the questions with which historical criticism has acquainted us, such as the old documents, manuscripts, variants, translations, and the history of the Canon. All along this line he shows how very human factors have entered into the writing and preserving of this collection of sacred writings.

From ch. VIII on the author appreciates and popularizes some

of the conclusions concerning the New Testament reached by Harnack in his "Origin of the New Testament" (reviewed by us in the November number of the Magazine, 1926, p. 80).

He takes up the problem, for instance, how it came that only four gospels were adopted in our N. T. although there were others. He discusses the epistolary religious writing of those times, to which we owe such a large portion of the N. T. And he traces the origin and completion of the N. T. canon, pointing out the causes which produced it, and produced it just then. Finally, he tries, following Harnack, to weigh the vast consequences the fixing of the N. T. has had for early Christianity, the history of the church, and the faith and theology of our own times.

The book is written in fresh and popular style. Even the laymen will appreciate it. It gives a luminous presentation of the whole question, abounds in illustrative material on every phase of the argument, and is a most convincing contribution to the accomplishment of its purpose, namely, a more adequate and correct understanding of the bible.

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**The Gospel of Opportunity.** Ventures in the Interpretation of the Gospel of Jesus by Charles E. Schofield. The Abingdon Press. 1927. 189 pages. $1.25.

Contains 12 sermons, in which the author seeks to open the eye of the ordinary church member to the great possibilities in human life, or if we prefer to look at it from the divine side, to the measureless power of the gospel of Christ to create opportunities for lives of fulness and service. The writer, while at times quite careful in his exposition of Scripture terms, as a rule makes a direct road for application. From the men and situations of the sacred book he easily and naturally passes on to the hearers and the church before him. The most valuable feature of the addresses is, in our opinion, the wealth of illustrations he has at his disposal. A great many are taken from his own experience, and all are told with great effect. The minister who desires to refresh his jaded brain or replenish his supply of anecdotes and parables, will here find what he wants in rich variety. His pictures are so fresh and vivid that they cannot but captivate reader and hearer. I have tried the book myself; it strikes the spark of inspiration in the preacher's mind and making a sermon becomes easy.

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**Modernism, Fundamentalism and Catholicism,** by *Will H. Smith*, Rector Trinity Church, Wethersfield, Conn. Morehouse Pub. Co., Milwaukee. 1926, 152 pages.

Three schools of thought, or religious tendencies, are described in this book, and the author belongs to the third. He interprets Modernism and Fundamentalism fairly and correctly, but it becomes clear enough as he comes to the last school, that for him they are both extremes that won't heal the troubles of the church.

He sees already many signs of a return to the Catholic position; people and churches wanting to get back to a historic Christianity older than "the Bible and the Bible only." Everywhere the tendency to build churches more beautiful and to make use of symbolism in decorations, furniture and vestments, is growing. More than that, in the Anglican Communion, in America and England, Catholicism is strongly in the ascendent. Even in Germany the "Hochkirchliche Bewegung" shows a similar trend. Anglo-Catholicism is "openly recanting 90% of the traditional protests against Rome. Once they gloried in the name Protestant and now they glory in the name Catholic. They believe the sacraments are necessary for salvation. They make their confessions; pray for the dead; invoke our Lady and the saints. They pray for the reunion of Christendom, and have profound respect for the Roman Church."

The church, so says the writer, has come to see that the bible is not the ground and pillar of the truth. There was a Christian church long before there was a bible: there must be an authoritative source of interpretation, and that is the Church. Man is not saved by faith only, he must be a member of the church. The Sacraments must be put in their old place of absolute importance.

Anglo-Catholics do not want to go back to Rome, that is, to the old unyielding Rome. Still they are willing to restore all that was good in the Roman system. The Lord prayed his last great prayer for the unity of the church. This unity is not accomplished by collecting all Protestant sects in the Federal Council, on a basis that does not even mention doctrines. It must be expressed by adopting the same faith, and in outward sacramental union.

The (Anglo) Catholics are working for such union. A union based on the ancient faith and order. To make faith a matter of the individual judgment only, would lead to chaos. The church must express and guarantee the faith. And this church must herself show her credentials of authority: it must be able to point to an unbroken succession of its bishops back to the apostles.

The union must include the Roman church. The Anglo-Catholics are working for that now. The author points the way how Episcopalians may find recognition by Rome. Then the Free Churches may follow, and, finally, the unity of Christendom may find "its fitting symbol in a constitutionalized primacy of the successors of St. Peter."

Doubtless some of our readers will be rubbing their eyes as they see this: the Anglo-Catholics repudiating Protestantism and embracing at least 90% of Romanism! The movement is strong in the Church of England and of considerable influence in the Episcopal Church. However, there is no trend towards Rome in other Protestant countries. If the Romanizers prevail, the Conference on Faith and Order, at Lausanne this coming August, will bring matters to a head; there will then be a definite break between Protestantism and a Romanized Anglicanism.

**Introductions to the Symbolical Books of the Lutheran Church.** A Historical Survey of the Ecumenical and Particular Symbols of Lutheranism, an Outline of Their Contents, and an Interpretation of their Theology on the Basis of the Doctrinal Articles of the Augsburg Confession *by J. L. Neve*, D.D., Dr. Theol., Professor of Symbolics in Hamma Divinity School, Wittenberg College, Springfield, Ohio. With Contributions by Geo. J. Fritschel, D.D., Professor in Wartburg Seminary, Dubuque, Ia. Second Revised Edition, 1926, Columbus, O. The Lutheran Book Concern. 454 pages, $2.75.

In this book Dr. Neve discusses first the so-called ecumenical creeds, namely, the Apostles', the Nicene, and the Athanasian, giving interesting information on their historical development. Then he takes up the Augsburg Confession and devotes the greater part of the book (pp. 83-307) to an exposition of the 21 articles of this important document. After that follows his comment on Melanchthon's Apology, the Smalcald Articles, the Catechisms of Luther. Prof. Fritschel concludes with comment on the Small Catechism and on the Formula of Concord. A minute Table of Contents (pp. 22-39), in the front part of the book and a Topical Index at the close make reference to any particular part of the book easy.

Our Synod enumerates the Augsburg Confession as one of the three symbols whose interpretation of Scripture we follow. Here in this neat and handy volume we find a clear presentation of its contents; and the reader will be no less interested in what the author has to say on the ecumenical creeds. We recommend the volume very cordially.

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**The New Psychology and the Christian Faith,** by *Fred C. Spurr* (Minister of Hamstead Rd. Baptist Church, Birmingham, England). Fleming H. Revell Co., 1925. 190 pages, $1.50.

All new knowledge coming to the race seems at first hostile to "the faith once delivered to the saints," whether such knowledge comes from astronomy, biology or other realms of natural science. A struggle ensues forthwith between the champions of faith and those of science, and in the end it is found that there is no cause for deadly warfare. If only both sides are willing to give each other the same respect, observing the boundaries of their respective province.

The new psychology the author refers to is used by various schools in such a way as to seriously affect and modify Christian experience. Such schools are New Thought, Theosophy, various cults of mental healing, and psychoanalysis.

Their idea of God is in part pantheistic. They all make light of sin. Sin is only an imperfect stage, soon to be left behind; or it is an illusion of the mortal mind. Solution comes by true thinking. "God lies all around us. Tap him by thought and be raised to divinity." Man's task is to get in tune with the infinite (Trine). The powers to be released for his liberation reside in him. Instead of man's rising

beyond himself, to the divine sources of life and salvation, he is to rely for help on the unlimited—though obscure—reserves of the subconscious.

Over against that the writer insists on the super-personal factor of the divine, on the need of the revelation of the deity; on the incarnation in Christ and reconciliation by him; on the divine presence realized by faith.

He gladly accepts the new emphasis on faith in the cults named. Autosuggestion, recommended and practised by such men as Coue, is akin to faith. But the Christian faith rests on a divine person, while suggestion bids man to lift himself higher by his own boot straps.

On the whole it must be said that Christianity accepts the light the new psychology sheds on some phases of the spiritual life, but that it wholly rejects the position that man is complete in himself if he only learns to unlock the door to the mental resources lying all around him. We fully agree with the writer in stressing the need of revelation and a personal divine savior although we claim that the Christian experience can only come by faith and man is not to be argued into it by intellectual proof.

In this connection the author says: "Faith is a venture. Until you make this venture there will never be real peace of mind. Amiel, that noble German, whose life was so sad and pensive, betrays his secret in this sentence: "My thoughts are straying in vague paths. Why? Because I have no belief. All my studies end in notes of interrogation." A note of interrogation is an ugly hump-back thing. Christ changes it into a note of exclamation, straight and challenging.!! "Now we know."

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**The Interpreter's House,** by *Charles Nelson Pace.* The Abingdon Press, 1927. 178 pages, $1.00.

Nine essays in which the author seeks to interpret the signs of the times and to adopt the gospel message to the changed mind of to-day. The center of the Protestant church is to him the pulpit; and its function is "to turn the light of divine revelations on the perplexities and perils that beset the human mind; to interpret all the experiences of mankind in their relation to the Kingdom of God." "To seek ways of capturing the interest of that passing crowd is a thoroughly Christian procedure. To get the attention of the public that the claims of Christ may be presented is in the line of duty."

One way to secure this attention will be opened if we remember that this is an age of science. Science revives for us the venturesome spirit of the Puritans who went out of their country to find a new world. In a different way science makes for us a new world. Its achievements are such that there is no telling how far it may yet take us. Again, science renews for this age the lost sense of personal responsibility in its methods of accuracy and efficiency which bear down heavily on the individual. And it preaches the sovereignty of law in its insistence on the universality of its sway.

The best essay in our opinion is that on "Changed Emphasis":

from a dogmatic to a diffused goodness; from a private to a public righteousness; from a reformative to a preventive salvation; from an autocratic to a persuasive Christianity. The author's characterization of the attitude of the mind of to-day shows fine observation and a correct balancing of the good and evil tendencies. He is a convinced disciple of the social gospel but never forgets the necessity of the reconstruction of the individual life.

A very remarkable little book, that will amply repay the thoughtful reader.

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**Das Jahrhundert der Kirche.** Geschichte, Betrachtung, Umschau und Ziele. Von D. **Dr. O. Dibelius,** Generalsuperintendent der Kurmark.

Unser alter Bekannter und Freund vom Jahre 1921, vor einiger Zeit zum Generalsuperintendenten der Kurmark (hauptsächlich Provinz Brandenburg) ernannt und daraufhin von Gießen zum „Doktor der Theologie" freiert, legt in diesem Buch seine Gedanken und Hoffnungen über die protestantische Kirche Deutschlands nieder.

In einem geschichtlichen Ueberblick über die Entwicklung der Schöpfung Luthers kommt er zu dem überraschenden Resultat, daß wir bisher eine eigentliche (lutherische) „Kirche" in Deutschland nicht gehabt haben, d. i. einen selbständigen kirchlichen Organismus, der das gesamte religiöse Leben zusammenfaßt und als eine Achtung gebietende Größe im Volksleben dasteht. Luthers Interesse heftete an der Predigt des göttlichen Worts. Wenn nur das Evangelium gepredigt und die Sakramente stiftungsgemäß verwaltet würden, so würde sich alles andre schon finden. Er legte kein Gewicht auf die Organisation der Gemeinde oder der Kirche als eines Ganzen. Da er keine kirchlichen Bischöfe fand, so hielt er sich an die Staatshäupter als „Notbischöfe", und im Laufe der Zeit geriet die Kirche in völlige Abhängigkeit von den Fürsten. Zu welcher unwürdigen Knechtseligkeit dies im einzelnen führte, kann man bei D. nachlesen. Das Zeitalter der Orthodoxie kämpfte für die reine Lehre, die „fides quae creditur," zum Schaden des Lebens und der „fides qua creditur." Der Pietismus pflegte das christliche Leben, des einzelnen, der ecclesiola, und schaute herab auf die Kirche, die ecclesia. Der „Idealismus" der Philosophen und Dichter beachtete kaum die Kirche als Anstalt und als geistige Größe. Auch im Preußen des 19. Jahrhunderts wurde das nicht anders. Es brachte Union und Agende, aber die Kirche erwarb sich weder Freiheit noch Autorität. Die Arbeiterwelt der modernen Industrie wandte sich von ihr ab als einer Staatsanstalt und Stütze des bestehenden Systems. Der Staat (Bismarck) stellte sich allen Selbständigkeitsbewegungen der Kirche mit brutaler Geringschätzung entgegen.

So konnte man — nach D. — von einer Kirche im eigentlichen Sinn nicht reden. Die einzige Ausnahme machten die westlichen Provinzen mit ihrer presbyterialen Verfassung, hauptsächlich die reformierte Kirche der Rheinprovinz, wo der kalvinistische Geist ein rühriges, selbständiges, lebensfähiges Kirchenwesen geschaffen hatte.

Der Rückblick des Verfassers führt zu keinen erfreulichen Resultaten. Dennoch läuft er aus in der hoffnungsfrohen Feststellung, daß man **jetzt** eine Kirche in Deutschland habe. Die Revolution von 1918—19, was sie auch sonst an Gutem zerstört habe, habe die Kirche vom Staat befreit und ihr da-

mit die Möglichkeit gegeben, aus eigenen, d. i. geistlichen, Kräften ein Neues anzubahnen.

In dem nächsten Kapitel, worin D. die Kirche als ein soziologisches Gebilde, als eine selbständige Lebensform betrachtet, hebt er Bekenntnis und Kultus als wesentliche Faktoren heraus. Die Autorität derselben, sagt er, gründet jede Kirche auf Offenbarung; doch erhebt er sich nicht, wie viele hier tun würden, zu temperamentvoller Betonung der Unverletzlichkeit der Bekenntnisse. Die Wahrheit, so sagt er, die sich auf Offenbarung gründet, muß jedem Geschlecht auf neue Weise verkündet werden.

Dagegen liegt dem Verfasser sehr daran, das Wesen der Kirche von dem Sektenideal zu unterscheiden. Die Kirche richtet den Blick auf das Ganze des Volks, nicht bloß auf Einzelbekehrung und -Erbauung. Die Kirche ist ferner nicht von gestern her, sondern hat eine lange Geschichte, daher eine Tradition. Sie bleibt mit der Geschichte in lebendigem Zusammenhang, während die Sekte, Geschichte und Tradition vergessend, ein unvermitteltes, zeitloses Neues darstellen will. Die Sekte verlangt das Absolute, ihre Kirche besteht nur aus Bekehrten, und sie löst sie aus allen geschichtlichen Zusammenhängen. Darum besteht auch die Sekte selten lange als Sekte. Mit dem Wachstum wird sie immer mehr kirchenähnlich, oder aber sie bleibt klein und verknöchert.

Als Hüterin von Bekenntnis und Kultus ist das Amt eingesetzt. Als Spitze desselben kann sich D. nur das bischöfliche Amt denken. Hier ist seine Argumentation nicht überzeugend. Die ganze reformierte Kirche und viele andre sind doch bis jetzt gut ohne Bischöfe ausgekommen.

D. zeichnet sein Bild mit viel Wärme. Doch ist er sich wohl bewußt, wie viel Tausende und Millionen in Deutschland sich nicht überzeugen lassen werden, ob nun der Widerstand von dem deutschen Individualismus kommt oder von den entkirchlichten Massen. Seine Feder ist hier tief in die nüchterne Wirklichkeit getaucht. Was der deutsche Philister, der Eigenbrödler, der Sozialist gegen die Kirche einzuwenden hat, kommt uns oft so ungereimt vor, daß man es als reine Verbohrtheit empfindet und sich freut, daß man mit solchem Material nichts zu tun hat. Dennoch verläßt den Verfasser sein Optimismus nicht, und er hofft, daß die Schicksalsgemeinschaft, in die besonders die letzten Jahre das ganze Volk so hart gebunden hat, irgendwie der Kirche als der großen Trägerin volksvereinender Bestrebungen zugute kommen möge.

Im 3. Kapitel hält D. Umschau in der Welt und kommt zu der freudigen Ueberzeugung, daß ein großes Neues heraufzieht, ein neues Zeitalter, eine neue Lebensanschauung. Ja, er verkündt froh: **Ein Jahrhundert der Kirche** ist im Anbrechen! Er weist hin auf den Aufschwung der katholischen Kirche, auf kirchliche Bewegungen in England, Schottland, Kanada, den Vereinigten Staaten, Schweden, Holland. Ueberall, so sagt er, ist die Welle der Kirche im Steigen. Die Kirchen fühlen, daß ihre Aufgaben so groß sind, daß nur in gemeinsamem Ringen ihre Lösung möglich sein kann. Dabei denkt er besonders an die Ziele, die sich bei uns mit dem Begriff des Social Gospel verbinden. Dies Kapitel wird man mit ganz besondrem Interesse lesen.

Im letzten Kapitel, dem „Buch der Ziele," stellt sich der Verfasser angesichts der riesenhaften Probleme, welche der deutschen Kirche harren. Ihre

Kräfte so gering (Preußen hat 9000 Geistliche, dagegen 120,000 Volksschullehrer!), ihrer Feinde so viel und ihre Arbeit in der Vergangenheit so wenig fruchtbar. Er dringt auf mehr Bibelkenntnis (Bibelabschnitte responsorisch in den Kirchen zu lesen!), auf treues Halten zu Christo, unserm einigen Herrn (Bekenntnisfragen seien kräftig und — weitherzig zu lösen!), auf freies Verhältnis zur Wissenschaft, auf Mitarbeit der Kirche an dem Kulturprogramm, auf Versöhnung der Klassenunterschiede durch die Kirche. Die kitzliche Frage bezüglich des Verhältnisses der Kirche zum jetzigen (republikanischen) Staat berührt er nur höchst behutsam. Er sagt dazu: „Die Staatsform spielt keine Rolle. Geschichtliche Vorgänge können die Kirche in die Opposition gegen eine Staatsform treiben. Grundsätzlich aber kann eine evangelische Kirche, wie die Tatsachen beweisen, jede Staatsform bejahen und in jeder Staatsform ihren Dienst ausrichten." Das nennen wir eine Sache diplomatisch behandeln. Man bedenke, daß D. in der Kurmark arbeitet, wo der Monarchismus tief im Blut sitzt.

Man kann das Buch nur mit tiefstem Interesse und reichem Gewinn lesen. Der Optimismus des Verfassers ist herzstärkend. Dabei kennt er die Schwierigkeiten der Lage nur zu gut. Schon 1921, als Deutschland tief darnieder lag, erfrischte uns sein froher Glaube, als er unter uns erschien. Hier schreibt derselbe Dibelius. Wir wissen nicht, ob wir auf ein **Jahrhundert** der Kirche rechnen dürfen. Aber daß die Welt die Kirche braucht, wissen wir; und daß die Kirche sich überall reckt zu neuem Leben, wissen wir auch. Also reihen wir uns den Optimisten an, deren Lebensquelle der Glaube ist.

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**Die deutsche evangelische Theologie seit Schleiermacher.** Ihre Leistungen und ihre Schäden von **Ferd. Kattenbusch,** Professor in Halle. 5. Auflage. 1926. Verlag von A. Töpelmann in Gießen. 160 S. M. 6.50.

Wir haben dies Buch s. Zt. empfehlend erwähnt, als die 4. Auflage erschien. Jetzt erfolgt, bald nach der 4., die 5. Auflage, ein Zeichen, daß die Popularität der Schrift nicht nachgelassen hat.

Der Verfasser beschreibt im 1. und 2. Teil den überragenden Einfluß Schleiermachers, des Schöpfers der neueren protestantischen Theologie, und verfehlt auch nicht, auch in der Folge auf die Nachwirkungen seiner Gedanken bis in die neueste Zeit hinzuweisen.

Dann geht er alsbald zu Ritschl über, der vor Schleiermacher den Vorzug habe, daß in seinem System das Ethische stärker betont werde. Auch zeige er ein größeres Verständnis des Geschichtlichen und des geschichtlichen Faktors der Offenbarung in dem biblischen Christus. K. sieht die Schranken in Ritschls System deutlich genug. Seine Einschätzung von R. im allgemeinen weicht erheblich ab von der, die in unserm Lager üblich ist. Doch ist unter den Theologen des 19. Jahrhunderts kaum einer gewesen, der ihn an Schule machender Kraft übertroffen hat. Nur die Kinder des Pietismus, die Biblizisten und Konfessionellen lehnten ihn völlig ab.

Im 4. Kapitel folgt eine Besprechung der religionsgeschichtlichen Schule (besonders Troeltsch) und im 5. der unmittelbaren Gegenwart mit ihren drei Richtungen, der spekulativen (Heine, Tillich), der soziologischen (Kutter, der jüngere Blumhardt) und der „dialektischen" Theologie (Barth, Gogarten, Brunner).

Zum Schluß macht K. selber den Versuch zu zeigen, wie in der Zukunft eine Förderung der theologischen Entwicklung zu erreichen sei, nämlich indem man sich von der griechischen, bez. philosophischen Gottesidee abwende und entschlossen von der Gottesidee des Evangeliums ausgehe, d. i. dem Gott als Person, der sich als Gott der Liebe geoffenbart.

In diesem Zusammenhang sagt K., daß es an der Zeit sei, **Schleiermacher nun allmählich ruhen zu lassen,** er sei so „ziemlich wesentlich ausgeschöpft." (Darob energischer Protest von Wobbermin, dessen Devise gerade ist: „Zurück zu Schleiermacher und dann vorwärts von Schleiermacher!" (S. Christl. Welt, 3. Febr. '27, S. 39 ff.).

Das Buch behandelt auf beschränktem Raum einen überreichen Stoff, es bietet eine oft verwirrende Menge von Namen und Gesichtspunkten. Eine wohltuende Objektivität ist dem Verfasser nachzurühmen.

Der amerikanische Leser wird gut tun, sich auf die Hauptsachen zu beschränken und das ihm nicht Kongeniale abzustoßen. Es geht ihm das Verständnis für die Vielfachheit der „Fragestellungen" ab und in den Höhen, die weit über dem Praktischen liegen, geht ihm der Odem aus.

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**Einführung in das Alte Testament** von D. **Joh. Meinhold** (ord. Professor in Bonn). Zweite völlig neubearbeitete Auflage. Verlag von Alf. Toepelmann in Gießen 1926. 350 S. M. 7.40, geb. M. 9.

Dies ist der 1. Band aus der „Sammlung Toepelmanns": **Die Theologie im Abriß.**

Auf beschränktem Raum wird hier viel geboten. Wie die Deutsche Literaturzeitung sagt: „Die Profangeschichte, die Literatur und die Religion Israels, sonst in drei Disziplinen bearbeitet: Israelitisch-jüdische Geschichte, Einleitung in das Alte Testament, Alttestamentliche Theologie, sind hier zu **einer einheitlichen Darstellung zusammengearbeitet.** Die einzelnen Abschnitte, in die der Geschichtsverlauf zerlegt ist, werden eingerahmt von einer Darstellung der politischen Vorgänge, und in diesen Rahmen wird hineingestellt, was zur Literatur und zur Religion der jeweiligen Epoche zu sagen ist."

Die Stellung des Verfassers ist natürlich die des wissenschaftlichen Kritikers und setzt im Leser wenigstens ein Verständnis für einen solchen Standpunkt voraus. Die Patriarchen z. B. sind sagenhafte Gestalten. „Israel schildert seine Vorfahren im Bilde friedfertiger Wanderhirten." „An der Persönlichkeit und dem Werk des Moses kann man festhalten, wenn auch die Kindheitsgeschichte außer Betracht bleiben kann." Moses erhielt seine Religion aus Midian in der Wüste, aber er machte etwas Größeres aus ihr.

Die Forderung, daß der Tempel in Jerusalem das Zentralheiligtum Israels sei, stammt aus nachexilischer Zeit.

Zu Jesaia 9, 1—7 sagt er, der Beweis, daß der Prophet mit einem persönlichen Messias gerechnet habe, stehe auf tönernen Füßen.

Die Gestalt des Elia ist sagenhaft. Aber es kommt wenig darauf an, ob die in solchen Geschichten geschilderten Gestalten und Begebenheiten geschichtlich sind. „Gerade in der Sage belauscht man eines Volkes innerste Gedanken am besten."

Im ganzen kann man wohl sagen, daß der Verfasser das äußerlich Wunderbare in das Reich der ausschmückenden Sage verweist, dagegen an der göttlichen Berufung der prophetischen Gestalten festhält (obwohl, soweit wir sehen, er darüber nur den Propheten sprechen läßt, sich selbst aber eines eigenen Urteils enthält.)

Er sagt am **Schluß**: „Viele Worte israelitischer Frommer haben Ewigkeitswert und darum Anspruch, auch in der christlichen Gemeinde weiterzuleben. Viele sind überholt und somit als vor- und unterchristlich abzulehnen."

Meinhold nimmt in dem Buch, so meinen wir zu sehen, den Standpunkt völlig Objektivität ein. Er referiert nur; er nimmt keinen Anlaß, eine persönliche Note anzuschlagen.

Stil und Darstellung sind durchaus durchsichtig. Die Resultate eindringender Arbeit werden daher dem Leser bequem zugänglich gemacht.

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**Das Neue Testament** nach dem Stuttgarter griechischen Text übersetzt und erklärt von **Oskar Holtzmann** (Professor in Gießen). Verlag von A. Toepelmann in Gießen. 1926. Dritte (Schluß-) Lieferung. Zirka 300 S., M. 7.50.

In dieser Schlußlieferung des obigen Werkes (die ersten beiden Lieferungen von uns s. Zt. besprochen) erhalten wir die Pastoralbriefe des Paulus, den Hebräerbrief, Jakobus-, zwei Petrus-, Judas-, drei Johannisbriefe, die Offenbarung und des Evangelium Johannes.

Ueber seinen Standpunkt spricht sich der Verfasser im Prospektus offen aus. Er plaidiert für den steten wissenschaftlichen Fortschritt der Geistlichen. Dazu gehört nach ihm, daß er sich von den im Neuen Testament enthaltenen legendarischen Ueberlieferungen frei mache. H. verschweigt nicht, wo im Neuen Testament Legende zu finden ist. So z. B. sagt er bei der Einleitung zum Markus bezüglich der dort berichteten Wunder: „Daneben tritt die fromme Legende, die die Größe des Herrn den Unmündigen in Wundern und Zeichen mundgerecht macht und sein Werk im Bilde verstehen läßt." Und von dem Wunder bei der Hochzeit zu Kana: „Jesu Jünger sind Hochzeitsgäste, und er, als der große Freudenspender, gibt neuen Wein. Mit ähnlichen Sagen waren die Heiden durch die Dionysusfeiern vertraut." „Die Legende ist nicht das Evangelium. Das Evangelium sagt, daß Gott in der vergänglichen sündigen Welt **dennoch** Herr ist, also über Vergänglichkeit und Sünde hinweghilft. Das ist der ewige Wert des Christentums."

Die Uebersetzung und kurzen Besprechungen sind zum Verständnis des Textes wertvoll.

Man gewinnt aus dem Werk eine deutliche Anschauung davon, wie sich die liberale Theologie zum Neuen Testament stellt, in den Abstrichen, die sie macht und in dem, was sie als wertvoll beibehält.

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**Konfessionskunde** von D. **Herm Mulert,** ord. Professor der Theologie. Zweite Hälfte. Verlag von Alfred Toepelmann in Gießen. 1927. 300 Seiten, M. 8.50.

Die Besprechung dieses inhaltreichen, interessanten Bandes behalten wir uns für das Juliheft vor. Die 1. Hälfte haben wir s. Zt. (September 1926, S. 398 ff.) rezensiert.

**Das Reich Gottes** in amerikanischer und in deutscher Theologie der Gegenwart von H. Frick, Professor für systematische Theologie an der Univ. Gießen. 1926, Verlag von Alf. Toepelmann, 22 S., 1 Mk.

In diesem Vortrag stellt Professor Frick (vor einem Jahr in diesem Land weilend und auch in unsrer Synode bekannt geworden) der amerikanischen Auffassung vom Reich Gottes die deutsche gegenüber. Nach der amerikanischen (besonders an W. Rauschenbusch gemessen) ist das Reich Gottes die Zentralidee des Christentums. Die christliche Arbeit soll sich nicht zufrieden geben mit der Einzelbekehrung, noch mit der Pflege des christlichen Familienlebens, noch mit innerer und äußerer Mission. Die menschliche Gesellschaft selbst mit allen ihren Einrichtungen soll christianisiert werden. Wir beten in dem Herrngebet, daß das Reich Gottes komme, und das „auf Erden" gilt für die zweite Bitte sowohl wie für die dritte. „Es ist die Aufgabe des Christentums, das Leben auf Erden umzuwandeln in ein Reich der Gerechtigkeit." Wie weit und wie bald es darin Erfolg haben wird, steht in Gottes Hand. Klar ist jedenfalls, daß das Evangelium der Sauerteig sein muß, der alle menschlichen Verhältnisse durchdringen soll. Mögen manche im Aeußerlichen stecken bleiben und in der Ausbreitung der Zivilisation das Kommen des Reiches Gottes sehen. Die Kirche selbst setzt ihre Hoffnung auf den Geist Christi und seinen schließlichen Sieg. Da sie weiß, daß der einzelne wesentlich ein Produkt seiner Umgebung ist, so sucht sie alle menschlichen Verhältnisse umzugestalten. Sie sieht ihr Ziel nicht bloß in der Bekehrung einzelner, die dann doch der Uebermacht unchristlicher Gesellschaftszustände unterliegen würden, sondern sie arbeitet auf die Neugestaltung dieser Zustände selbst hin. Sie ist an der Ueberwindung der „Kollektivsünden" (Krieg, Kapitalismus, Korruption) wenigstens ebenso interessiert, als an der von Einzel- oder persönlichen Sünden. Die biblische Begründung für diese ihre Kampfstellung findet sie in der Idee des Reiches Gottes. Daß schließlich die Vollendung von oben kommen muß, hält sie fest. Doch ihr Augenmerk ist auf das gerichtet, was sie unter göttlichem Beistand auf Erden zu tun hat, nicht auf das, was Gott zu seiner Zeit vom Himmel tun wird.

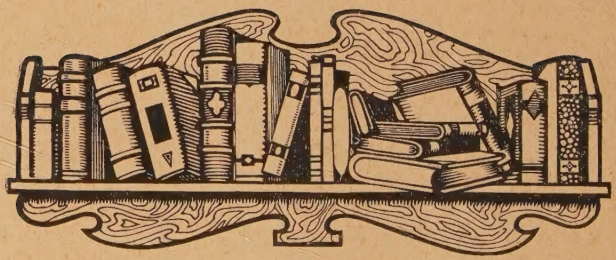
Dem gegenüber hält die deutsche Theologie mit Luther fest an der Zentralstellung des Artikels von der Rechtfertigung durch den Glauben und lehnt auch eine Kombination von Rechtfertigungs- und Reichsgottesidee als zwei Polen der Ellipse ab. Das christliche Gemeinwesen, das da ist oder immer mehr kommt, ist nicht das Reich Gottes, auch kein Stück und keine Teilverwirklichung desselben. Es ist „Ausdruck des Glaubens an das kommende Reich, prophetisches Zeichen. Wir beschleunigen nicht das Kommen des Reiches Gottes (das steht Gott allein zu), wir **verkündigen** es nur durch unser Verhalten und Tun. Was Menschen tun, ist Zeugnisdienst, nichts weiter."

Jedoch sollen wir — nach Frick — als Christen wirklich glauben an das kommende Reich, herankommend **in der Zeit!** Und sollen von den Amerikanern lernen, eine **kollektivistische** Ethik aufzubauen, nicht bloß eine solche des Individuums. „Mit allem unsern Tun aber bauen wir nicht das Reich Christi, sondern wir verkündigen nur, daß es ein regi (regiert werden) a Deo in Christo gibt."

Der Amerikaner vergißt nach Fr., daß es ein **kommendes** Reich gibt, und daß dieses Kommen geschieht „von selbst" (Mark. 4, 28). Dem Lu-

theraner ist die Bitte: Dein Reich komme! ein Seufzer, daß es noch nicht gekommen ist; und die dritte Bitte soll ihm sein ein Gebet der ethischen Energie, die die Stunde ausnützt, weil sie weiß, daß ein Hier und Heute unwiederbringlich dahingeht.

Diese Argumentationen Fricks werden amerikanische Christen kaum überzeugen. Gewiß kann die Vollendung nur am Ende der Weltzeit kommen, aber wir können nicht umhin, an einen wachstümlichen Prozeß des Kommens des Reiches zu glauben. Wenn es keinen Fortschritt gäbe, so würden dem Glauben die Flügel gelähmt. Und dieser Fortschritt, letztlich immer auf göttlichen Kräften beruhend, kommt zustande durch menschliche Werkzeuge.

Es ist herzstärkend, sich möglichst auf Luther berufen zu können, aber Luther ist nicht die Quelle aller christlichen Erkenntnis.

Der Vortrag ist von ungewöhnlichem Interesse; F. setzt sich auseinander mit allein einschlägigen Vertretern. Wir empfehlen ihn ganz besonders unsern Freunden des „Social Gospel."